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ABSTRACT

Very Special Arts creates learning opportunities through the arts for people with disabilities, especially children and youth. The organization offers programs in creative writing, dance, drama, music, and the visual arts. These programs are provided in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, New York City, and 85 countries. A descriptive summary of program activities in the United States, planned for the period from October 1995 through September 1996, is presented in this publication. Programs are organized by state. The Index of Frequently Requested Programs is cross-referenced by Programs and Services, Artistic Disciplines, and National Programs. (MM)

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1996
Very Special Arts
Program Prospectus

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VERY SPECIAL ARTS

Very Special Arts creates learning opportunities through the arts for people with disabilities, especially children and youth.

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VERY SPECIAL ARTS

PROGRAM

PROSPECTUS

1996

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- National Programs

The *1996 Program Prospectus* is a publication
of the State Services Department of Very Special Arts.

Editor, Azura Hassan,
with assistance from Heller An Shapiro, Assistant Director, State Services,
Catherine Joyce, Stefanie Lima Taub, Shelly Marsh and Grace McLinn.

Special thanks to Cynthia Aldridge, Communications Department,
and the National Programs Department.

PREFACE

Very Special Arts is an international non-profit organization that creates learning opportunities through the arts for people with disabilities, especially children and youth. The organization was founded in 1974 by Jean Kennedy Smith as an affiliate of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Using creative writing, dance, drama, music, and the visual arts, our educational programs help people with disabilities develop learning skills, nurture independence and self-worth, and enhance well-being in every area of life. Very Special Arts programs are provided in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, New York City, and in 85 countries worldwide. Very Special Arts state affiliates serve approximately 2.5 million people across the United States, and our international affiliates serve an additional one million people.

The *1996 Program Prospectus* is a summary of Very Special Arts program activities in the United States, planned for the period from October 1995 through September 1996. This publication reflects the creativity and diversity of arts programs throughout the Very Special Arts network.

This publication may be a useful tool for the following audiences:

- The public seeking information about arts opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities, including the disability community, the arts community, parents and educators of children with disabilities and organizations serving people with disabilities;
- Disability and arts organizations, and funding institutions interested in collaborating with Very Special Arts affiliates;
- Individuals and organizations interested in volunteer opportunities through the Very Special Arts network;
- Very Special Arts affiliates interested in learning about programs conducted by other organizations within the network.

It is hoped that the sharing of these ideas encourages continued creativity, involvement with and collaboration between Very Special Arts state organizations across the country.

We would also like to announce the Very Special Arts homepage on the Internet through the World Wide Web. Information about Very Special Arts and our publications, including this prospectus, is available "on-line."

Our thanks to the executive directors, board members and staff of Very Special Arts state organizations for their assistance in preparing this publication.

John D. Kemp, President and Chief Executive Officer
Judith O'Connor, Executive Director
Soula Antoniou, Director, State and International Services Department

March 1996

About Very Special Arts Programs

Very Special Arts programs are implemented through a network of local, state, national and international Very Special Arts organizations and affiliates, in collaboration with educational and cultural institutions, arts agencies, associations for people with disabilities, and health and rehabilitation organizations. Parents, volunteers, teachers, trainers, artists, health specialists and other experts also play an important part in these programs. Very Special Arts affiliates listed in this publication increase opportunities for people with disabilities to participate fully in their communities through various programs and initiatives.

Very Special Arts' National Programs Department designs and initiates programs that state organizations choose to adapt or replicate in their own communities. The programs are described below.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. First piloted at Georgetown University School of Medicine, the program is now offered at medical and nursing schools across the country.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Festivals are organized on the state and local levels in collaboration with schools, hospitals, recreation facilities and other community organizations.

Legacy Program — The Legacy Program offers oral history exercises and arts activities to older adults at senior citizen centers, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other appropriate sites. Involvement in the program helps older adults reconnect with significant times in their lives, rediscover a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and build meaningful relationships with other program participants.

Native American Initiative — The Very Special Arts Native American Initiative provides opportunities for Native American children with disabilities to learn through exploring contemporary and traditional art forms. A collaborative effort between Very Special Arts and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the initiative promotes arts programming in BIA schools and culminates in a National Native American Very Special Arts Festival.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves

people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Originally developed in cooperation with the Alvin Ailey Dance Center, the program is implemented by dance companies, ballet schools and recreational organizations throughout the country.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. *Start with the Arts* is implemented in hundreds of classrooms across the country.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem.

Very Special Arts Institute: Yamagata Fellows — The Very Special Arts Institute: Yamagata Fellows, named for visual artist and Very Special Arts supporter Hiro Yamagata, is a comprehensive program focusing on the creative learning process in the arts. Each year, artists with disabilities from around the world are selected as Yamagata Fellows to spend a week together exchanging ideas and sharing adaptive techniques in the visual arts. The week-long Institute has been held at such prestigious locations as the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the Royal Museum of Arts and History in Brussels, Belgium. The Institute culminates in a gallery exhibit of the artists' work.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts state organizations coordinate VSA/ITT Career Development Festivals at ITT Technical Institutes across the country. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., these festivals provide young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for

professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company.

The **Very Special Arts Gallery in Washington, D.C.,** represents emerging and professional artists with disabilities. Through informative and engaging exhibitions, the non-profit gallery creates opportunities for the public to enjoy and purchase works of the highest quality. Rotating exhibitions feature folk art, crafts, paintings, sculpture, photographs and jewelry. Proceeds from art sales benefit the artists and programs of Very Special Arts.

For more information about Very Special Arts, please contact the national office or your state affiliate.

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Art from Alabama — Since 1994, Very Special Arts Alabama has loaned artwork to the seven Alabama congress leaders in the Washington, D.C. and Alabama offices. Students and teachers from schools from all 131 public school systems respond to this project's call for art.

Art Teach — Multidisciplinary arts classes are conducted for over 30 students and adults with disabilities in the Huntsville area each year. Classes are held at the Parkway City Hall, the Mental Health Center and Northern Alabama Rehabilitation Center. Works from the classes are exhibited at local malls and galleries.

Art Ventures — Approximately 1,000 students and adults with and without disabilities participate in various arts and educational activities sponsored by Very Special Arts Alabama throughout the year at the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan. An exhibit from the Art Ventures project tours throughout the state.

Artist Residencies: Visual Arts/Creative Movement/Music — Approximately 1,725 children and adults with disabilities participate in art activities under the direction of two professional artists. Participants learn to express themselves through an art form as well as develop self-confidence and self-esteem. The program culminates with participation in Very Special Arts Alabama festivals throughout the state. Rotating artist residencies are conducted September through May.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects that build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. In 1996, the course is conducted at The University of South Alabama Medical School in Mobile.

Children's Theater — Each year, over 200 children with disabilities and children from underserved communities attend performances at the Birmingham Children's Theater to learn about drama and the theater.

Congressional Holiday Cards — Each year, congressional representatives from various Alabama congressional districts solicit artwork from Very Special Arts participants for their annual constituent holiday card. A call for art is sent to approximately 390 artists, including students.

Creativity: A Natural Bridge — Every year, the *Creativity: A Natural Bridge* art exhibit showcases works by approximately 325 Alabama artists with disabilities and fosters public awareness of the importance of the arts for all people. The theme expands the idea that art is a tool for all people to express themselves. The juried art exhibition hangs in various public buildings and museums throughout the state. As an outgrowth of this program, Very Special Arts Alabama also exhibits artwork by 125 Alabama artists with disabilities at the University of Alabama-Birmingham Spain Rehabilitation Center Art Gallery.

Early Childhood Project — Very Special Arts Alabama sponsors early intervention and infant stimulation programs at the Head Start Center in Birmingham for 150 students with and without disabilities. Music, puppetry and other appropriate arts activities are integral parts of the curriculum. In addition, parents of students are provided with audio cassettes in order to provide follow-up activities and continue training at home.

Exhibitions — Very Special Arts Alabama organizes various art exhibitions across the state, including the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, North Shelby and Leeds Public Libraries, the Birmingham Museum of Art, Mountain Brook High School, Metropolitan Arts Council, St. Vincent's Hospital, Medical Center East Hospital, UAB School of Optometry, Wheeler Library, Southwest Alabama Regional School and Wiregrass Museum. During Disability Awareness Month in October, approximately 775 artists are invited by Very Special Arts Alabama to demonstrate their talent through an exhibit that is rotated throughout Auburn University. Through the *Helen Keller Art Find*, artwork by children with visual disabilities is shown in a statewide exhibit. The Helen Keller Festival Board selects the award piece, which is displayed in a permanent gallery in Tuscumbia.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Alabama conducts festivals for over 26,000 students and adults in the following cities: Auburn, Birmingham, Decatur, Dothan, Hueytown, Mobile, Montgomery, Mountain Brook, Selma, Talladega, Tuskegee, and Baldwin and Jefferson Counties.

FRIENDS — FRIENDS is a year-round after school music program for approximately 20 students and adults with disabilities held at the Wiregrass Park and Recreation Center in Dothan. The musical group, comprised of two professional musicians and four volunteer parents, works with the participants to teach the importance of music in the lives of all people.

Murals Program — Each summer, Very Special Arts Alabama-Decatur provides the opportunity for 30 students in special education to create a mural entitled *Reach Out and Touch*. Teachers are encouraged to continue this program throughout the school year. Very Special Arts Alabama artists are currently designing a mural to enhance the walls of the State Rehabilitation Office in Birmingham.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. These dance and creative movement workshops allow 60 participants with disabilities to increase physical strength, self-esteem and self-discipline. In addition, New Visions Dance classes are used as a component of the graduate level training program at the University of Alabama in Birmingham for teachers of students who have visual impairments. Project coordinators, trained by Carol Penn Erskine, New Visions Dance Project National Trainer, are employed by a local dance company. Assistance is provided by classroom teachers, aides and volunteers from the Charity League.

Seniors and the Arts Project — More than 425 senior citizens with disabilities participate in visual arts and music activities at the Mary Abbie Berg Center in Mobile.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Alabama conducts *Start with the Arts* in the Selma and Birmingham Head Start programs and at the Mary Abbie Berg Center in Mobile, where teachers work with 58 students with disabilities to help develop the students' cognitive, personal, social and psychomotor skills through participation in developmentally appropriate activities. The program was introduced to Selma Public Schools during the summer of 1994 and has been implemented in the Jefferson County Head Start Program.

Summer Chill Out — Very Special Arts Alabama hosts two *Summer Chill Out* workshops for 45 students and adults with disabilities in Birmingham and Decatur. The workshops, taught by arts and education professionals, incorporate academics with visual arts, music, dance and leisure activities.

Tuskegee Art — The coordinator of Very Special Arts Alabama-Tuskegee teaches several art classes per week to students with disabilities in schools and community settings. Students display their work locally and in art galleries in southern Alabama, and many have received honors in state competitions.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Alabama plans to conduct its first VSA/ITT Career Development Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Birmingham. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Each year, Very Special Arts Alabama invites students to submit plays.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Very Special Arts Alabama issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. Finalists are nominated to participate in the Young Soloists Award Program at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS ALASKA

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Artists Training — Very Special Arts Alaska recruits and trains local artists to teach fine arts classes for people with disabilities. Very Special Arts Alaska also has a resource library and an *Artists' Guide* for teaching disability awareness and accommodation techniques.

Creative Writing — Very Special Arts Alaska provides poetry, fiction and visual arts workshops at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

Employment Training Program — Very Special Arts Alaska is developing a partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living Centers and Access Alaska to provide teens and adults the opportunity to develop employment and social skills through creative experiences and arts internships. This community-based program includes artists, local businesses, high school transition programs and state vocational resources in developing curriculum and placing students in appropriate internships and employment positions.

Festivals —Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. The 20th annual Rainbow Factory Festival in Anchorage offers a variety of arts experiences. The festival steering committee includes representatives from the Anchorage School District and the Municipality Parks and Recreation Department. Six artist residencies in schools and one inclusive adult art class at a museum are conducted and result in exhibits and performances at the Rainbow Factory Festival. In addition, Very Special Arts Alaska supports the annual Fairbanks Arts Association Festival, a one-day event serving hundreds of children in Interior Alaska.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. For the second year, Very Special Arts Alaska is receiving training and guidance from Very Special Arts New Mexico in 1996. The two state directors exchange resources regarding networking within the arts community, and program and board development.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Alaska has offered the program for several years, and instructor Jane Thiboutot continues to conduct an adults dance workshop in Anchorage.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Alaska, in collaboration with the theater group Black Arts North, offers a summer playwriting workshop for at-risk students in Anchorage schools.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS ARIZONA

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After School Program — A four-week artist residency is offered at the Gale Elementary School in Tucson. Students participate in various art activities in order to develop and enhance critical thinking skills. Art forms such as drawing, painting, crafts, face casting, mask making and paper mache are used reflect the Tucson cultures.

Arts For Me Studio & Gallery — Arts classes are offered daily for students and adults with disabilities in a non-competitive environment. Students study the techniques of master artists such as Mondrian, Picasso and Calder and create works based upon these styles. Monthly studies of subjects such as Egyptian and Renaissance art are an integral part of the program. At Tucson's Downtown Saturday Night celebration, participants demonstrate their artistic abilities and share with the public information about disabilities.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. In 1996, artwork created by 500 Very Special Arts Arizona student participants with and without disabilities are displayed in hospitals, schools, long-term care facilities, the Very Special Arts Arizona office and state legislators' offices.

Cottage Industry — Very Special Arts Arizona is working with the Pima Community College, the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Service and the Nogales-Santa Cruz County Economic Development Foundation to develop an ongoing cottage industry for women with low incomes. Resources, education, tools and materials are being identified to begin a collaborative program in which hand-crafts will be developed and marketed at area events and merchandise outlets.

Dulcimer Building and Exploration Program — Children at the Nogales Housing Authority build instruments from Dulcimer kits, and create and perform folk songs about their community. A guitarist teaches the children about this simple three-stringed instrument.

Educational Exploration Trips — One Saturday a month, 50 students from the Nogales Housing Authority travel outside their neighborhood to explore an educational place or event such as an art museum, historical monument, state park, experimental ranch, wildlife and bird sanctuary, art festival or community celebration.

Famous Faces Project — Six years ago, Very Special Arts Arizona began the Famous Faces Project, which provides workshops for students at The Arizona State School for the Deaf and Blind in Tucson. Students who are blind learn the variations of human faces and face casting skills using plaster gauze. Over 150 children and 35 adults with and without disabilities participate in this program. Through the years, 60 famous faces of sports figures, celebrities and Arizona legislators have been cast.

Feldenkrais Movement — Each year, Very Special Arts Arizona sponsors Feldenkrais Movement and Dance Workshops in Nogales for approximately 40 students and 60 senior citizens with and without disabilities. The workshops provide participants with the opportunity to increase physical strength, self-esteem and self-discipline. A professional dancer and movement specialist provides over 16 hours of instruction.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 9,000 people participate in Very Special Arts Arizona's three festivals in Nogales, Tucson and Yuma.

The Opera Creation and Production Program — Under the guidance of artist Betty Allen, 75 kindergarten students create original operas. As a theater company, students write librettos, create the music for their scores and critique each other's work. The students also hold auditions, rehearse and produce their work for audiences in schools and other community settings. Very Special Arts Arizona documents the academic growth of students in this project, which uses the principles of Whole Language development and Socratic teaching methodologies. Very Special Arts Arizona has been awarded $7,000 to explore the relationship between multiple literacies and the Opera project. Over 60 kindergarten and second grade students participate in this project. This study is supported by The Arizona Arts Education Research Institute, a partnership between the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Arizona Department of Education, Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona, created to enable teachers and researchers to document the relationship between teaching, learning and the arts.

Murals Programs — Very Special Arts Arizona implements a number of mural projects.

Clay Mural — Since 1992, Very Special Arts Arizona has provided arts education for students at The Arizona State School For the Deaf and Blind in Tucson. In 1996, the students create a textural clay mural as a permanent installation at the school. Students work cooperatively to determine the design, texture, and size of the mural.

Painted Murals — As a positive alternative to gang involvement, artist Francisco Norzagaray works with youth involved with gang "tagging" to create painted

murals in the Pima County Office Buildings. County workers and community members contribute ideas in developing the murals' themes.

School Murals — Approximately 250 second and third grade students create a permanent exterior mural and add murals to concrete playground benches at the Gale Elementary School. Students learn a new art form and develop their sense of design while beautifying their environment. This project is made possible by The Arizona Commission on the Arts, The Tucson Pima Arts Council, The Tucson Community Foundation and local tile companies.

Youth Center Mural — Students to create an exterior clay tile mural for a new youth center on the South Side of Tucson. Community organizations are also consulted in mural design and implementation.

Painting with Watercolor — For 10 years, Very Special Arts Arizona has offered a watercolor painting class for seniors. Up to 15 participants attend this program at the Santa Cruz Association for the Blind Center. It is a success among seniors who have never held a paintbrush. Artwork from this class is exhibited at the Nogales-Santa Cruz County Public Library and other community locations.

Polaroid Instant Starlight — Over 200 students with disabilities in Nogales schools participate in a Polaroid photography workshop. During this workshop, students gain a deeper appreciation for their families, friends and community. Their artwork is exhibited throughout the community.

Preschool Arts Program — The Arts For Me Studio and Gallery offers a preschool program under the leadership of Joyce Glorioso and Sharon Harrington. Preschool children with and without disabilities learn about themselves and the world around them through art activities featured in the *Start with the Arts* curriculum guide. *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities.

Project Raise — Each year, Very Special Arts Arizona provides artists and supplies for Project Raise, a project of the Pima County Adult Education Division in Tucson. This project enables participants, who have developmental disabilities, to explore various art mediums such as canvas, clay and paper murals.

Rock Art — A hundred students learn the history of Native American rock carvings and paintings by exploring petroglyphs and pictographs. Participants take field trips to see these symbols, transfer the image to paper and apply it to common stones.

Saturday Teen Theater — In collaboration with the Arizona Children's Home, Very Special Arts Arizona offers students with severe emotional disabilities the opportunity to explore theater arts. Students engage in all aspects of creating and producing a dramatic performance.

The Saturday Academy — This academic enrichment program enables 45 African American students to study African heritage through various art forms. Since 1992, Very Special Arts Arizona has provided similar Saturday programs in conjunction with the Tucson Urban League and Tucson Unified School District.

School Intercession Arts Program — Over 200 high school students participate in Native American bead working, paper mache, drawing and rock painting activities during the first intercession school year. The students host a public art show at the completion of the program.

Stained Glass Windows — For the sixth year, Very Special Arts Arizona provides a yearlong stained glass training for 1,120 students with and without disabilities at The Arizona Children's Home, Gale Elementary School and The Arizona State School For The Deaf and Blind. This program introduces students to glass art skills, the science of glass manufacturing, cooperative learning skills and related math skills. Participants create stained glass windows, kaleidoscopes, candle holders and sun catchers. At the end of the year, students install a stained glass window in their school.

Traditional Mexican Arts — Over 125 students with disabilities celebrate Mexican heritage by creating colorful paper flowers, piñatas and cascarones at four locations in Nogales, Rio Rico, Patagonia and Elgin.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Arizona issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program.

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Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Since 1993, the Arkansas Department of Education has implemented *Start with the Arts* in over 80 classrooms throughout the state.

Arts Workshops — Very Special Arts Arkansas conducts weekly multimedia arts workshops at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center. Over 50 participants with disabilities of all ages benefit from the opportunity for creative expression through professional art instruction and group studio time. Exhibits of students' artwork are displayed at various locations throughout the state during the year. A summer arts festival featuring the students and their artwork is held as a culminating event to the yearlong program.

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Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Very Special Arts California plans to offer this program as part of the University of California Medical School's elective curriculum. Students learn how the arts can ease the hospital experience for patients and their families and facilitate communication between health care professionals and their patients.

Education/Art Outreach — A mini-grant program is offered to Very Special Arts California district sites for art programs that address specific community needs for children and adults with disabilities. This program serves to strengthen existing programs and establish new programming sites.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 80,000 people attend Very Special Arts California festivals in the following locations: Chico, Costa Mesa, Fresno, Indio, Lancaster, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Marysville, Modesto, Oceanside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Jose, San Rafael, Santa Ana, Santa Cruz and Visalia.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts California offers training for educators to learn strategies and adaptations for including children with disabilities in integrated learning environments. This program culminates with an early childhood festival involving parents, young children, teachers and administrators.

Teacher Training — In partnership with Very Special Arts Massachusetts, Very Special Arts California trains 25 to 40 teachers on strategies to integrate the arts into

special and regular education academic curriculum by using the *Multi-Arts Resource Guide* and companion videos.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts California provides a 10-week artist-in-residency program at a VA Medical Center in San Francisco.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS COLORADO

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ABLExpressions — Very Special Arts Colorado hosts ABLExpressions, an art show and sale of works of various mediums by over 40 artists with and without disabilities. Plans for 1996 include an expansion of this event to reflect the depth and richness of the many arts programs of Very Special Arts Colorado and the many arts institutions throughout the state that provide programs for people with disabilities. The 1996 collection of works include oil, pastel, acrylic, tempera, photography, pottery, computer graphics and quilting. Proceeds from ABLExpressions benefit Very Special Arts Colorado's Scholarship Program.

Arts Access Consultations — Very Special Arts Colorado provides accessibility consultations to over 50 arts organizations throughout the year. Each consultation includes an on-site survey to determine how facilities can be altered to improve physical and programmatic access for people with disabilities. Very Special Arts Colorado also reviews the accessibility plans of all arts organizations seeking funding from the Colorado Council on the Arts.

Audio Description — Very Special Arts Colorado provides seven trained audio describers who relate all visual aspects of live performances, such as costuming and sets, to theater patrons who have visual disabilities. Using closed circuit microphones, audio describers impart non-verbal aspects of stage presentations to audience members wearing special earphones. Very Special Arts Colorado audio describes 30 to 50 performances throughout the year, ranging from Broadway shows to local theatrical performances.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Colorado conducts festivals involving over 12,300 people in the following cities: Denver, Durango and Grand Junction.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive

techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. In partnership with the Sangre de Christo Dancerz, Very Special Arts Colorado sponsors four New Visions Dance troupes in Littleton, Lakewood, Glenwood Springs and Pueblo for 55 students and adults with disabilities. Participants take part in creative movement classes and perform before a variety of audiences. Weekly dance rehearsals provide students the opportunity to increase physical strength, self-esteem and self-discipline.

Scholarships — Very Special Arts Colorado conducts a scholarship program which enables people with disabilities and low incomes to exercise their creativity by participating in a variety of art classes throughout the Denver metropolitan area. Scholarship money is available to help offset class fees, cost of access accommodations, materials and transportation. In 1996, class sites include the Swallow Hill Music Association, The Art Students League of Denver, The Arts Studio, the David Taylor Dance Theater, the Museum of Outdoor Arts, the City of Aurora Cultural Arts Center and the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance/New Dance Theater.

Touring Art Show — Each year, Very Special Arts Colorado tours an art show around the state. Works from Very Special Arts Colorado artists with disabilities are displayed in various community settings and are viewed by over 4,000 people annually.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS CONNECTICUT

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Artist Residencies — Since 1995, Very Special Arts Connecticut has sponsored visual arts workshops for adults with chronic mental illness at the Gateway Counseling Center in Chester. The Gilead Mental Health Center in Middletown was added as a site in 1996. The workshops are led by a professional artist with a disability and engage participants in a variety of media.

Connecticut Children's Museum — Metal sculptor Karen Rossi conducts art workshops for children with disabilities at the New England Air Museum using the theme of inventions and flight. Designs and artwork created become part of the permanent art collection of the new Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford.

ChalkWalks — Very Special Arts Connecticut sponsors *ChalkWalks*, hands-on art activities in which participants decorate streets and sidewalks with chalk art. *ChalkWalks* take place at various Very Special Arts Connecticut festivals throughout the state, such as the Torrington Street Festival, KidzFest!, and in conjunction with the Very Special Arts Connecticut Gallery, at First Thursday celebrations in Hartford's Arts and Entertainment district.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Connecticut involves 20,000 participants in four festivals in Hartford, Guilford, New Haven and Torrington.

Legacy Program — The Legacy Program offers oral history exercises and arts activities to older adults at senior citizen centers, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other appropriate sites. Involvement in the program helps older adults reconnect with significant times in their lives, rediscover a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and build meaningful relationships with other program participants. Very Special Arts Connecticut received a Legacy Grant to conduct the program at the Blue Hills Senior Center in Hartford. Five teens from the City of Hartford's summer work program interview seniors at the center with help from an oral historian. Participants create a booklet based on the interviews, and a quilter assists the seniors and students in creating blocks for a story quilt based on their life stories.

Mayor's Awards Program — Very Special Arts Mayor's Awards acknowledge and celebrate individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the arts or enhanced the cultural life of the community, particularly as it relates to persons with disabilities. The awards are intended to create and/or strengthen relationships between Very Special Arts and the political, artistic, cultural and educational communities of the city. Very Special Arts Connecticut Mayor's Awards are presented to residents of the Hartford-area at the fundraising Roast of Hartford's Mayor. Awards are given to a teacher, an artist volunteer, an artist with a disability, an arts advocate, a business leader and a humanitarian.

Multi-Arts Resource Teacher Training — In-service workshops for classroom teachers are conducted by an educator and professional trainer using Very Special Arts Massachusetts' *Multi-Arts Resource Guide*. The *Multi-Arts Resource Guide* and companion videos demonstrate how educators can integrate the arts into special and regular education class curriculum. Teachers from New Britain, Windham, Stonington, School District 13, and the Connecticut Art Educators Association conference are participating in the training.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. In 1995, Very Special Arts Connecticut hosted a two-day New Visions Dance Project workshop at the Warner Theater Center for the Arts in Torrington. The training took place under the direction of Barry Hughson, a former dancer with the Washington Ballet, and was conducted by Carol Penn Erskine, national New Visions Dance trainer. Very Special Arts Connecticut continues to sponsor New Visions Dance workshops throughout the state.

Percussion Workshops — As part of the *Art Saves Lives* initiative of Very Special Arts Connecticut, percussion workshops are offered to children from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hartford to promote the arts as an alternative to drugs and violence. Conducted by jazz musician and collage artist Ralph Yohuru Williams, students create music and construct their own percussion instruments while Mr. Williams discusses life and death issues faced by children who live in inner-city communities. The percussion ensemble performs at KidzFest! and the Guilford Fair. Since 1994, this program has reached over 80 children ages 9 to 13.

Traveling Art Exhibition — Curated by the Promenade Gallery and Very Special Arts Connecticut's executive director, the exhibit *From the Inside Out: Thirteen Very Special Visions* is traveling after its January debut at The Bushnell, a performing arts center in Hartford. This exhibit features the artwork of 13 Very Special Arts Connecticut artists. Very Special Arts Connecticut mounts several exhibitions each year at the request of galleries and organizations who wish to highlight an awareness of the abilities of people with disabilities.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Since February 1994, Very Special Arts Connecticut has sponsored this widely praised program, coordinated by Vietnam veterans James Shanahan and Dennis Ward. They work with VA Medical Centers patients in geriatric programs in West Haven and patients in geriatric, psychiatric and substance abuse programs in Newington, totaling over 400 veterans per year. Artwork created by veterans in the VA/Very Special Arts Connecticut Program is displayed at various art galleries and universities throughout the year.

Very Special Arts Connecticut Art Gallery — Very Special Arts galleries showcase the creative talents of professional and emerging artists with disabilities through exhibition and sale of art work. The Very Special Arts Connecticut Gallery continues its four-year tradition of showing work by adult semi-professional artists with disabilities and artwork from Very Special Arts Connecticut student and adult programs. Hosting six exhibitions annually, with opening receptions held in conjunction with the Greater Hartford Arts Council's First Thursday arts and entertainment celebration, the gallery also serves as a way to introduce artists to the arts community.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS DELAWARE

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Art Awards — Each year, Very Special Arts Delaware sends nomination forms throughout the state offering the public the opportunity to recognize outstanding students and adults with disabilities in the visual and performing arts. The nominations are reviewed by a team of visual and performing arts professionals, and award recipients are announced at an annual festival. Award recipients receive a stipend to continue study in their artistic discipline and are invited to perform or exhibit at future Very Special Arts Delaware festivals and programs.

Artist Residencies — Very Special Arts Delaware places artists in schools throughout the state to teach visual and performing arts and to train staff working with students with disabilities. The Very Special Arts Delaware staff provides disability awareness training to each artist who participates. Individuals who participate in this program exhibit their artwork or perform at Very Special Arts Delaware festivals.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Delaware conducts festivals in the following cities: Claymont, Dover, Elsmere, Harrington, Millsboro, New Castle, Smyrna and Wilmington. These festivals take place in various settings, including hospitals, a shopping mall and libraries; and they serve a diverse audience of people with and without disabilities. The festivals highlight for the public the accomplishments of individuals who have received training and arts opportunities provided by Very Special Arts Delaware's ongoing programming.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. *Start with the Arts* has been instituted at one site in New Castle County which provides services to children with more severe

disabilities. Very Special Arts Delaware's goal is to replicate the program at additional sites.

Theater Experiences — Very Special Arts Delaware sponsors an annual children's theatrical performance at the Everett Theater in Middletown. Over 300 children and adults enjoy a musical that encourages young audience members to sing along while learning a timely message. The production facility is adapted for children with disabilities. This program is presented with assistance from the Delaware General Federation of Women's Clubs.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Annually, Very Special Arts Delaware funds an artist residency program at the Veterans Hospital in Elsmere. Artists work with 30 long-term care patients in creating works of art or a performance, which are then featured at the state festival in Dover. As a culminating event, Very Special Arts Delaware coordinates a mini-festival at the hospital so that additional patients and guests can participate in arts activities.

Very Special Arts Delaware Gallery — Delaware State University provides Very Special Arts Delaware with exhibit space at the college gallery for one month annually. Very Special Arts Delaware sponsors an exhibition of student and adult artwork.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Delaware issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. Very Special Arts Delaware recognizes one artist each year for outstanding accomplishments in music by awarding a stipend to fund their music studies for one year. Choral groups from around the state are encouraged to include students with disabilities in their programs and to nominate these students for the Young Soloists Award. Musicians nominated for the program are reviewed by a panel of music professionals. A soloist is then nominated to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

WASHINGTON VERY SPECIAL ARTS (DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA)

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Arts and Humanities Initiative — Washington Very Special Arts, in collaboration with 25 District of Columbia arts and humanities organizations, is working to develop a directory of services and an interactive newsletter to inform the community about arts and humanities opportunities and projects in the city's schools.

Arts Employment — Washington Very Special Arts' artsJAM!© program combines vocational training and work experience, and where appropriate, academic and social skills training to enable young people with disabilities, 14 to 21 years old, to develop the life and job skills needed to successfully transition from the classroom to the community. All of the work experiences are in an inclusive setting. The project serves over 75 youths in 1996.

artsJAM!© Gallery & Cafe — Washington Very Special Arts is in the planning process of opening a student-run art gallery where youth with disabilities learn retail, customer service and arts entrepreneurial skills. This gallery will open in 1996. This project receives major support from the U.S. Department of Education, The Dole Foundation for the Employment of People with Disabilities, and Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation.

Festival — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Each year, Washington Very Special Arts conducts *The Arts Are Magic Festival* at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Over 3,500 children and adults with and without disabilities from the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area participate in educational art activities, concerts and theatrical performances. The 1996 festival, on April 10, focuses on educating children about the importance of the environment.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of

programming and organizational ideas. Washington Very Special Arts was awarded a 1996 grant to receive guidance and assistance from Very Special Arts Utah, which operates the Art Access Gallery. Very Special Arts Utah shares its expertise on gallery operations with Washington Very Special Arts to assist in the development of the artsJAM!© Gallery & Cafe.

Rotating Art Exhibit — During 1992, Washington Very Special Arts introduced *Art on the Move*, a rotating art show that introduces the work of Washington Very Special Arts' artists to viewers in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan community. This moving art show rotates through offices, studios, conference rooms, lobbies, lounges, restaurants, and other public and private sites in the Washington, D.C., area. Continuing in 1996, each show rotates every six months.

Summer Arts Program — Washington Very Special Arts sponsors an annual Summer Arts Program at Trinity College to provide intensive training in the arts for up to 40 District of Columbia students with and without disabilities. Classes are offered in drama, puppetry, drawing, painting, jewelry making and computer design. The focus of this program is to teach marketable arts skills. Many of the works of art produced by the Summer Arts Program participants have been exhibited at D.C. ART/WORKS, the D.C. Committee to Promote Washington, and in the offices of District of Columbia Council Members.

Summer Creative Arts Center Program — Annually, Washington Very Special Arts sponsors the Summer Creative Arts Center Program at Trinity College to provide intensive training in the arts for teachers of students with and without disabilities. Teachers from the D.C. Public Schools summer program receive training which encourages them to use an arts-infused methodology in their teaching practice. The focus of this year's program is on spatial intelligence, as delineated by Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

Training Programs — Each year, Washington Very Special Arts provides training to artists, teachers, parents and others who work with youth with disabilities. The training focuses on the use of the arts for a variety of purposes, including the enhancement of communication and social skills. This year's program focuses on training secondary teachers to use the arts with at-risk youth.

Whole School Arts-Infused Program — Washington Very Special Arts has developed a project with several schools to integrate the arts into all academic subjects, involving all school staff to participate in planning educational approaches. The arts infusion process is driven by the education goals and objectives of the schools. Professional artists lead classroom art activities, and teachers participate in all activities so that they can continue art instruction after the artists' residencies are completed. The goal of Washington Very Special Arts is to implement this program in additional D.C. public schools.

World Wise Art Program — This community outreach project involves children with and without disabilities in the District of Columbia and addresses

environmental issues. The project engages students to explore solutions to the community's environmental problems. The World Wise Art Program includes an educational component, an artistic/international exchange, and a hands-on community activity during which students adopt and care for a public park. Artwork produced by participants is displayed at *The Arts Are Magic Festival.*

VERY SPECIAL ARTS FLORIDA

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Abilities Project — In partnership with Abilities, Inc. and the Pinellas County Arts Council, Very Special Arts Florida conducts an innovative project focusing on the benefits of art therapy for patients with brain injuries. Sessions are designed to contribute to research in this area with oversight and evaluation provided by Florida State University and the University of South Florida.

Accessibility Training Conferences — Very Special Arts Florida developed a series of accessibility training conferences to serve arts and cultural organizations by teaching them methods for expanding their programs to serve people with disabilities. The conferences included sessions on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and strategies for improving both physical and programmatic accessibility. In addition, Very Special Arts Florida collaborates with The John and Mable Ringling Museum to implement curricula focusing on museum accessibility for students with disabilities. Since 1995, in-service training is conducted for museum staff, educators and artists on the facilitation of school and museum accessibility programs for exceptional learners. Very Special Arts Florida conducts accessibility training conferences focusing on museum accessibility and adaptive techniques for dance professionals.

Art Exhibitions — Artwork created by student artists with disabilities is exhibited at galleries in Brevard County, Dade County, Hillsborough County, Polk County and Treasure Coast during the year. These exhibitions provide viewers the opportunity to appreciate the abilities of the student artists.

Artist Residencies — Very Special Arts Florida supports artist residencies statewide in Pensacola, Clearwater, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Ft. Myers, West Palm Beach, Belle Glade, Melbourne and Daytona Beach. A long-standing partnership between The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Palm Beach County Cultural Council, and the Palm Beach County Department of Parks and Recreation allows Very Special Arts Florida artist residencies to expand to underserved neighborhoods and after school projects.

Arts for a Complete Education (A.C.E.) — Very Special Arts Florida is a founding member of Arts for a Complete Education (A.C.E.). A.C.E. is a unique consortium of professionals in the fields of arts, education, business and community service that is based at the University of Central Florida and organized for the purpose of

supporting and developing arts education. Very Special Arts Florida, in collaboration with A.C.E., develops and publishes an arts education curriculum guide for students with disabilities.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. In 1993, this program was implemented by Very Special Arts Florida at the University of South Florida College of Medicine in Tampa. Very Special Arts Florida is developing a curriculum to assist hospitals and other medical facilities in implementing this program. In 1996, Arts Boxes for hospitalized children are being field tested with underwriting for final production by Hasbro Toys, Inc.

Coffee Concerts — Very Special Arts Florida, in partnership with The Pinellas County Arts Council and The Pinellas County School Board, provides students and adults with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy coffee while learning and taking pleasure in concerts by leading performing arts groups in Tampa Bay throughout the year.

Combining Music, Dance, Drama & Creative Writing — Very Special Arts Florida continues to implement *Combining Music, Dance, Drama & Creative Writing*, a series of programs and workshops by ImproVision, a creative arts partnership of artists, instructors and associates. The programs are designed for school projects, in-service teacher training, community group projects, corporate programs and special events which include people with and without disabilities.

Crafts for the Senses — In partnership with Florida Craftsmen, Inc., three exhibitions have been developed to display artwork created by people with disabilities using a multisensory approach to creating fine crafts. The exhibit Crafts *for the Senses I* is currently housed in the Pinellas County School System. The *Crafts for the Senses II* exhibition toured Florida and Georgia and was donated to the Cummer Museum in Jacksonville. The *Crafts for the Senses III* exhibition, owned by Very Special Arts Florida, debuted at the Florida Craftsmen Gallery in St. Petersburg and is now touring statewide.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Florida conducts 50 community arts festivals serving 60,977 individuals in the following locations: Baker, Bardford, Bradenton, Chiefland, Cocoa Beach, Dade County, Daytona Beach, Flagler, Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Myers, Ft. Pierce, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Lakeland, Largo, Milton, Naples, Orange Park, Orlando, Panama City, Pensacola, Punta Gorda,

Putnam, Sarasota, Shady Hills, St. Augustine, Tallahassee, Tampa and West Palm Beach.

Florida Institute for Art Education Collaborative Project — Very Special Arts Florida and The Florida Institute for Art Education, an affiliate of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, are developing training resources and documenting the utilization of a discipline-based arts education model to use with students with disabilities. The goal of this project is to inspire the use of comprehensive approaches to art education for students with disabilities in classrooms, museums and other learning environments across the country.

Juvenile Justice — Through a partnership with the Florida Department of Corrections and Florida State University, Very Special Arts Florida continues to conduct the Arts for Incarcerated Youth with Disabilities program. The program is designed to teach inmates tolerance, personal and community conflict resolution skills, and effective communication skills through creative drama. Four regional workshops, facilitated by Very Special Arts Florida, highlight existing programs and give technical assistance for resource development.

Kidsart Festival — In partnership with the John and Mable Ringling Museum, Very Special Arts Florida provides the opportunity for over 5,000 children and adults with and without disabilities to participate in Kidsart Festival, a multidisciplinary, multicultural festival. This day-long event encourages and welcomes children and adults to partake in workshops and demonstrations in visual and performing arts. In 1996, Kidsart Festivals are planned for the Cummer Museum in Jacksonville and The Miami Youth Museum.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. In 1996, Very Special Arts Florida and Very Special Arts Indiana are providing guidance and assistance to Very Special Arts Pennsylvania in the areas of district development, board development, accessibility training and program development.

Professional Development — Very Special Arts Florida continues to conduct many professional development workshops on the arts, education and disability awareness. Workshop topics address adaptive instructional techniques for visual art, dance, drama, music and interdisciplinary projects. Throughout the year, 5,000 teachers use these training workshops to gain certification credit in 50 out of the 67 counties in Florida.

Recital — Very Special Arts Florida-Palm Beach County presents their sixth annual Very Special Arts Holiday Showcase Recital at the Duncan Theater in Palm Beach. Over 100 youth and adults with and without disabilities from Martin, Palm Beach, Broward and Dade counties participate. The program also includes a pre-show reception and silent auction that is open to the public. Talent Recitals also occur in

Daytona Beach and Cocoa Beach. In addition, students with and without disabilities from Volusia County participate in a Talent Night Showcase sponsored by Very Special Arts Florida. Performing live on stage, students juggle, dance, tumble, sing and act in skits.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. In 1993, Very Special Arts Florida was selected as a field test site for *Start with the Arts*. *Start with the Arts* is implemented as a curriculum statewide along with pre-kindergarten teacher training, student mentorship and community festivals in Brevard, Hillsborough, Leon, Orange, Polk and Santa Rosa counties.

Very Special Arts Gallery/Gift Shop — Very Special Arts galleries showcase the creative talents of professional and emerging artists with disabilities through exhibition and sale of art work. Through a partnership with the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach, the Very Special Arts Florida Gallery/Gift Shop opened in December 1995, featuring the work of national, state and local artists with disabilities.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Florida coordinates career development festivals at the ITT Technical Institutes in Ft. Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Maitland and Tampa. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Florida invites students from all school districts in the state to submit a play.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer

Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Florida issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. Very Special Arts Florida invites students across the state to submit entries. Finalists are nominated to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

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ALIVE — Very Special Arts Georgia's *Arts Liberate, Invigorate, Validate and Educate* (ALIVE), a series of workshops and performances by professional artists with and without disabilities, is a statewide program funded by the Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Council for the Arts. The programs are tailored to the specific needs of each community and reach approximately 10,000 people throughout the state. Programs in the ALIVE series include:

Art Design - Several sites conduct a call for art related to the theme of their festivals. One piece is selected as the basis for the festival theme and is printed on T-shirts, invitations and programs. All of the artwork from the competition is exhibited at the festival.

Clay Art - Coordinated by Very Special Arts Georgia-Columbus, students from classes in Muscogee County enjoy workshops in clay sculpting by Ricky Murphy, a sculptor with a disability. He leads participants with and without disabilities through his techniques for sculpting small prehistoric creatures with clay. Many of the pieces are exhibited at Very Special Arts Georgia-Columbus' festival, which also includes an art stop conducted by Mr. Murphy.

Dancing On Air - Very Special Arts Georgia-Brunswick conducts Dancing On Air workshops at two schools. A teacher works with participants who have hearing disabilities to create dances that incorporate creative movement, flag-waving and sign interpreters for lyrics that are performed as a part of Very Special Arts Georgia-Brunswick's festival.

Gracewood Puppeteers - The Gracewood State School & Hospital Puppeteers, a troupe of adults with physical disabilities, perform for over 1,000 students and adults with and without disabilities at the Ritz Theater in Brunswick. These educational and entertaining performances and workshops use unique electromechanical switches, pulleys and motors to manipulate the jaws of the troupe's intriguing puppets.

Harmonica Harmony - Mike Rogers, a musician who is blind, conducts harmonica workshops for elementary and middle school youth in several counties and districts throughout Georgia.

Laughing Matters - This comedy improvisation troupe provide interactive performances that deal with real societal issues in an entertaining and enlightening manner. The troupe also conducts workshops teaching

participants to use their wit and comedic abilities to deal with difficult situations.

Musical Expressions - Well-known Georgia musicians, including Willie Moody and Fred Moss, conduct vocal and instrumental music workshops for students and adults with disabilities. Their original songs are presented at local Very Special Arts Georgia festivals and for neighboring schools.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. Hospital patients are given the opportunity to select artwork to decorate their own room and to participate in arts workshops within the facility. Very Special Arts Georgia conducts art workshops for over 100 patients annually at Shepherd Spinal Center and Cook-Berrien Hospital. Both sites hold group exhibits for the public, family and friends.

Cultural Paralympiad Very Special Arts Regional Festival (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — Very Special Arts Georgia organizes and hosts a regional festival as a part of the 1996 Cultural Paralympiad in Atlanta. Artists, performers and musicians with disabilities from Very Special Arts Southeastern affiliates perform or conduct arts workshops. The festival promotes the understanding and acceptance of similarities and differences of all people, showing that regardless of age, race, disability or financial status, all have unique talents to share with the world. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

DanceAbility - Dancing Wheels Georgia — Very Special Arts Georgia provides weekly dance classes teaching professional dance techniques to dancers of all abilities. These dancers then provide lecture/demonstrations to local schools and community groups throughout the year.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Georgia conducts 23 festivals for over 19,000 participants in the following locations: Albany, Atlanta, Augusta, Brunswick, College Park, Columbus, Coralwood, Decatur, Dublin, Dunwoody, Griffin, Jonesboro, Milledgeville, Moultrie, Nashville, Newnan, Sautee, Savannah, Suwanee, Thomasville, Waleska and Waycross.

First Night Atlanta — Very Special Arts Georgia participates in First Night Atlanta, a community New Year celebration of visual and performing arts activities and events. First Night celebrations across the country broaden and deepen the public's appreciation of the arts through an affordable and accessible New Year's Eve program for families. This year, Very Special Arts Georgia presents musicians and dancers to over 1,000 viewers.

Legacy Program — The Legacy Program offers oral history exercises and arts activities to older adults at senior citizen centers, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other appropriate sites. Involvement in the program helps older adults reconnect with significant times in their lives, rediscover a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and build meaningful relationships with other program participants. Very Special Arts Georgia received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to conduct workshops and personal interviews with seniors at the Palmetto Senior Center. Drama workshops are developed based on the participants' favorite personal stories, and seniors from other centers are invited to attend a culminating performance.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum to share programming and organizational ideas. Very Special Arts Georgia received a 1996 Mentoring Grant to continue providing training and assistance to Very Special Arts Kentucky in the areas of fundraising and board development. Throughout the year, Very Special Arts Georgia's executive director travels to Kentucky to work with Very Special Arts Kentucky's staff and board of directors in developing effective and innovative fundraising ideas and creating strategies for diversifying the board.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Georgia hires a professional dancer to consult with Muscogee County Schools five times during the year. Each classroom of students with and without visual disabilities receives instruction on body and vision awareness.

Step Beyond Drama Troupe — Coordinated by Very Special Arts Georgia-Shepherd Spinal Center, this drama program instructs actors with and without disabilities in all aspects of theater including acting, writing, directing and technique. Actors meet and rehearse weekly and develop plays for public presentation.

The Tapestry Project — Very Special Arts Georgia works with acclaimed tapestry artist Sola Fiedler to conduct tapestry workshops for individuals with disabilities. Participants produce one foot by one foot tapestry squares that can be bolted together in various configurations for display and exhibition.

Unbound Tour — In 1994, Very Special Arts Georgia produced *Unbound*, a musical album featuring performances and original compositions from artists with and without disabilities. Musicians present concerts and residencies in seven locations across the east. A goal of these presentations is to spread the message that disability does not signify inability.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS HAWAII

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Access Hawaii — Very Special Arts Hawaii provides a number of programs for persons with and without disabilities during their hotel stays, including activities focused on Hawaiian art forms, community excursion companion services for persons with disabilities and activity-based respite services for parents of children with disabilities.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. Very Special Arts Hawaii professionally frames and exhibits artwork created by 30 artists with disabilities in galleries, community activities and other venues.

A.R.T.S. (Arts Resource Team for Special Education) — Specialists in dance, drama, music, literature and the visual arts provide in-service training for teachers and conduct participatory arts activities for 300 students with disabilities in classrooms throughout the state. Artists spend an additional two hours with each teacher to prepare and evaluate the activities.

Companion, Respite and Community Access Services — Very Special Arts Hawaii offers one-on-one community-centered companion services and activity-based respite services. In addition, Very Special Arts Hawaii offers training on ways to make community arts programs more accessible to persons with disabilities, such as instruction which targets social skill practices, community resource identification, activity planning, telephone use, time management, mobility training and other related skills.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. On every island, over 3,862 community members attend Very Special Arts Hawaii's annual festivals, which are open to the community and tailored to preschool through eighth grade students with and without disabilities.

First Night Honolulu — In collaboration with First Night Honolulu, a community New Year's Eve celebration of visual and performing arts activities and events, Very

Special Arts Hawaii sponsors hands-on arts activities for the community throughout the evening.

Kids on the Block — *Kids On The Block* is an educational performance utilizing puppet characters with and without disabilities. The show promotes open attitudes, stresses the uniqueness of individuals and gives children the chance to see that people are more alike than different. For over 11 years, Very Special Arts Hawaii has sponsored *Kids on the Block*. This year, 21,000 students participate in performances, followed by discussions.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. In 1996, 60 students in Hawaii participate in New Visions Dance classes.

Partners Project — Each year, intern opportunities are provided by Very Special Arts Hawaii to approximately 10 interns with disabilities to work one-on-one with professional artists. Each intern is given 15 hours of guidance and instruction by the artist. The project culminates with an exhibition of the interns' work at an art gallery in Honolulu.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS IDAHO

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Naturally Occurring Arts Experiences in Idaho's Communities — Through the support of the Idaho State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Very Special Arts Idaho offers a grants program, *Naturally Occurring Arts Experiences in Idaho's Communities*, to encourage inclusion of people with disabilities in the arts. Up to seven human services and local arts agencies are awarded grants ranging from $100 to $1,500.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. In the fall of 1995, Very Special Arts Idaho offered a training workshop for 20 dance instructors emphasizing adaptation techniques for including students with disabilities in the classroom. As a result of this training, Very Special Arts Idaho collaborates with the Idaho Commission on the Arts to offer dance classes to 40 students at the Footlight Dance Center in Sun Valley and at Ballet Idaho in Boise. Very Special Arts Idaho received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to implement this project.

VSA/ITT Career Development Project — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Idaho coordinates its first VSA/ITT Career Development Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Boise. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides 200 young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills. Participants work one-on-one with ITT students in computer-aided design and electronics labs.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. During 1996, Very Special Arts Idaho collaborates with the Idaho State Department of Education, Idaho Theater for Youth and IJA's Young Writers Competition to offer this program for the first time.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS ILLINOIS

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Artist Directory — Very Special Arts Illinois developed the *Artist Directory*, listing artists with and without disabilities, which is available to schools and other service agencies throughout the state.

Artists Unlimited Project — Visual artwork created by Very Special Arts Illinois participants is made available to area hospitals and nursing homes. Over 600 students in Peoria create artwork for this project.

Arts for All Training Team — Very Special Arts Illinois established the Arts for All Training Team to help foster ongoing arts programs and to develop Very Special Arts Illinois programs in communities throughout the state. The Training Team is a diverse group of parents, teachers, artists, caregivers and community leaders committed to providing arts experiences for individuals with disabilities. Their combined years of experience, extensive resources and activity ideas help to establish successful arts programs in numerous communities. A guidebook, *Arts for All...Making it Happen*, is available to all interested community members who are developing arts programs.

Arts For Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Very Special Arts Illinois conducts this program at Methodist Medical Center in Peoria and at the Rehabilitation Institute in Chicago.

Continuing Education Workshops — Very Special Arts Illinois offers a 36-hour Activity Orientation Program for activity directors of health care centers and community recreation leaders. The workshop provides hands-on learning

experiences for effective activity programming, including training in life span changes, community integration, and activity program management. Participants who complete the 36-hour program qualify as certified activity directors in Illinois and receive a Certificate of Completion.

Creative Journeys — Very Special Arts Illinois collaborates with Peoria ARC to offer vacation trips for 70 adults with disabilities and their friends. Each vacation trip offers an arts event or component. Vacationers and escorts travel to events such as the Chicago "loop", museums, dinner theaters, country music festivals and the Olde English Faire.

Creative Writing — Over 120 students in Pekin and Peoria record the oral histories of older adult residents in long term care facilities. The students also create original artwork which reflects the residents' stories. A publication of stories and artwork is presented to all participants. In addition, the students' original artwork is matted, framed and donated to the long term care center for residents to display in their room.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibition, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 11,353 people attend Very Special Arts Illinois' 16 festivals in Chicago, Danville, Edwardsville, Evanston, Freeport, Glen Ellyn, Kankakee, Peoria, Pekin and Waukegan.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Approximately 60 students with Down Syndrome and 40 adults with disabilities participate in New Visions Dance classes in Jacksonville, Chicago and Springfield.

Seniors and the Arts — Very Special Arts Illinois provides arts workshops in creative writing, visual art, music, dance and theater for 40 adults with disabilities in Peoria.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Illinois offers *Start with the Arts* to 100 preschool students.

State Resource Center — Program resources such as lesson and activity plans, art education manuals and grant writing guidebooks are available to the public through Very Special Arts Illinois' Resource Center. Last year over 1,500 individuals used these resources. Located in East Peoria, the center distributes Very Special Arts materials and other supplies donated to Very Special Arts Illinois. Additionally, Very Special Arts Illinois' quarterly newsletter, *COMMUNIQUÉ*, and various posters and booklets are created and published by the Resource Center.

Theater Trunk — Professional theater artists provide drama workshops to over 850 individuals in Chicago and South Peoria through a program called Theater Trunk. Participants take part in improvisational exercises, mirror-imaging, costume selection and performances to gain a deeper appreciation of theater arts. Teachers attending the workshops are introduced to adaptive exercises which enable them to include persons with disabilities in their programs.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Illinois offers this program to 500 veterans in Peoria, Danville and Quincy.

VSAI Art Gallery/Gift Shop — Very Special Arts galleries showcase the creative talents of professional and emerging artists with disabilities through exhibition and sale of art work. Very Special Arts Illinois operates The Heartland Artisans Gallery and Gift Shop at the Sunnyland Plaza in Washington. The gallery represents emerging and recognized artists from the state of Illinois.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Illinois coordinates a VSA/ITT Career Development Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Peoria. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides 55 young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Year-Round Arts Instruction — Very Special Arts Illinois offers year-round arts activities throughout the state to 1,800 students and 1,200 adults with and without disabilities. Art programs such as painting, drawing, sculpture, photography and the performing arts are conducted by professional artists, award-winning arts educators, and music, art and recreation therapists.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The

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Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. In 1995, Leslie Kouzes, a cellist and Music Performance student at Northern Illinois University, was chosen as one of the two national recipients of this award.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS INDIANA

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Arts in Education — Each year, Very Special Arts Indiana conducts a series of artists residencies and visitation programs in schools and other facilities throughout the state. The residency program offers five-, 10- and 20-day sessions in storytelling, movement and dance, drama, visual arts and music. This program reaches over 1,100 people with disabilities, teachers, parents and caregivers.

Colors of the Wild — Since 1995, Very Special Arts Indiana has collaborated with the Indianapolis Zoo to further arts education, disability awareness and inclusion. This environmentally-themed project involves curriculum development for over 8,000 students with and without disabilities. In addition, five sites or schools conduct an extensive arts in education program, which involves teacher workshops and integration of the arts in the regular curriculum. During 1996, the Colors of the Wild program exhibits artwork at Very Special Arts offices, zoos and other interested sites. A touring exhibit includes 20 student's artwork, two limited edition prints and a learning kit about endangered species and wildlife habitat. Very Special Arts Indiana works with its Partners of the Americas sister state, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, to organize an international exchange of children's art.

Community Outreach — Very Special Arts Indiana provides funds to WFYI Public Television to purchase descriptive video service equipment to benefit 40,000 families of individuals who are blind or visually impaired. In addition, Very Special Arts Indiana provides training for audio describers and purchases portable equipment in order to provide workshops about the importance of audio description services for potential audience growth to Indiana arts agencies. Very Special Arts Indiana also provides audio description services on a trial basis to theaters and other arts agencies.

Creative Writing Program — Since 1994, Very Special Arts Indiana has offered a creative writing project at the Damien Center in Indianapolis. Yearlong workshops called, *Living Pieces*, are open to anyone with HIV/AIDS, caregivers, clergy, family members, spouses and partners. The project allows participants to express their feelings about coping with their illness through creative writing.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States.

Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth, and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 5,600 people attend Very Special Arts Indiana festivals in Central Indiana, Columbus, Evansville, Fort Wayne, South Bend and Muncie.

Lolly Art History Project — In its fifth year, the Lolly Art History Project, a component of the Child Life Program at Riley's Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, serves teens who are chronically or terminally ill. Each student is offered a framed print from a series of 25 art reproductions from the National Gallery of Art as well as activity sheets and supplies to engage in artistic activities. The dialogue between Very Special Arts Indiana's art consultant and the patient assists hospital staff in understanding and helping patients cope with their illnesses. A booklet of activity plans for younger children is being developed.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. In 1996, Very Special Arts Indiana and Very Special Arts Florida provide guidance and assistance to Very Special Arts Pennsylvania in the areas of district development, board development, accessibility training and program development.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Indiana celebrates its eighth year of conducting this program under the direction of Margot Faught, a master artist from the Indiana Arts Commission.

Training Workshops — Over 270 teachers and administrators receive disability awareness training from Very Special Arts Indiana. Among those who attend the training are elementary and secondary teachers throughout the state, student teachers at Indiana University, staff and student personnel of the Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department, and peer tutors from various high schools. In addition, Very Special Arts Indiana offers specialized disability awareness training workshops at universities, adult service centers and other institutions upon requested.

VSA Indiana Community Project Mini-Grants — Since 1994, Very Special Arts Indiana has offered mini-grants to local communities to support art program needs which are not being met by other community resources. Each grant is matched with an in-kind and partial cash match. These projects also allow Very Special Arts Indiana to establish contact in new areas of the state.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Indiana coordinates its sixth annual VSA/ITT Career

Day Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Indianapolis. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides 250 young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills. Discussions are underway to offer a Career Day in Evansville.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS IOWA

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Accessibility Clearinghouse — Very Special Arts Iowa provides accessibility information and training for performing arts facilities, art centers and other community resources where the arts abound. Very Special Arts Iowa is concerned not only with physical accessibility, but with programmatic and attitudinal accessibility as well. Very Special Arts Iowa has published an accessibility handbook, which is available to the public.

Artist Services — Very Special Arts Iowa maintains a roster of both professional and novice artists in the fields of performing arts, visual arts and creative writing. Sixteen artists have been trained to teach their techniques to teachers and children in school settings. Artists' applications are reviewed twice a year by a committee of artists, board and staff members. Very Special Arts Iowa also responds to requests for services relating to advocacy, transportation and discounts on materials. Several workshops on a variety of topics are planned.

Arts for Children Program — Very Special Arts Iowa provides a 15-hour class for music, visual arts, regular and special educators on how to use the arts in teaching academic and social skills to children with disabilities. Upon completing this course, participants engage in follow-up art residencies in their schools with a Very Special Arts Iowa artist with a disability. The visiting artist works in the classroom with the students for two or three class periods. Over 3,200 students are expected to participate in the program in 1996.

Building Bridges Day — Very Special Arts Iowa, in partnership with the Citizens Disability Council and the Central Iowa Center for Independent Living, organized an annual *Building Bridges Day* at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines to highlight Iowa organizations serving people with disabilities. This event features hands-on arts opportunities, performances and information tables. Thirty-five organizations participate in the *Building Bridges-Pathways to Accessibility* event.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Iowa conducts festivals

throughout the state in cities such as Ames, Ankeny, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Dubuque, Fort Dodge, Glenwood, Lacona, Mason City, Sioux Center and Woodward. The **Governor's Very Special Arts Festival,** held annually in conjunction with the Iowa State Fair, provides an opportunity for thousands of children and adults to participate in a wide range of arts activities. One feature of the festival is an exhibition of artwork by Very Special Arts Iowa artists, which is on display in the Cultural Center during the entire festival. Each day a different artist with a disability demonstrates his or her art techniques through an on-site workshop. The Festival's opening ceremony is traditionally hosted by the Governor of Iowa. This festival is an 11-day event and reaches over 200,000 participants and audiences.

Integrated Traveling Exhibit — An exhibit made up of artwork from artists on the Very Special Arts Iowa roster is scheduled to travel to locations around the Des Moines area, garnering widespread exposure for both professional and amateur artists. Exhibition sites include the American Mutual Life, Iowa State Fair, Capitol Square, Central Life, Iowa State Bank and the Iowa Department of Human Services. Future exhibits include artwork from the Iowa Sesquicentennial celebration.

Iowa Sesquicentennial Celebration — The state of Iowa celebrates its 150th Anniversary in 1996. Very Special Arts Iowa, through a grant from the Iowa Sesquicentennial Commission, has produced a commemorative exhibit of children's art submitted for the anniversary. Over 3,000 first through 12th grade students with and without disabilities participated in creating artwork while studying Iowa's 150-year history. The exhibit travels to various communities throughout the state during the year and is also on display at the Governor's Very Special Arts Festival during the Iowa State Fair.

Jacque Merritt Founders' Scholarship — Very Special Arts Iowa awards an annual scholarship to a person with disabilities to further their involvement in the arts. The guidelines for this award are being established. This fund was formed by donations in memory of Very Special Arts Iowa founder Jacque Merritt.

KidsFest — KidsFest, an event celebrating the child, is held annually at the Convention Center in Des Moines. Very Special Arts Iowa is one of the participating organizations to present a display booth with information about the products and/or services they provide for children. In 1995, over 1,000 children attended this event and participated in creating hand-made stamped cards.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Iowa, in collaboration with the Central Iowa Dance Company, conducts two weeks of training sessions in dance. Participants with disabilities, ranging in age from 8 to 20 years, learn basic ballet movements from professional dancers, as well as

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costuming and lighting techniques. The program is made possible through grants from the Iowa Arts Council and Delta Gamma Association.

Special Projects Grants — Each year, Very Special Arts Iowa provides grant opportunities to organizations, facilities, schools and individuals who submit proposals for activities such as performances, art projects, and training for people with and without disabilities. Previous grants have included a mime performance, puppet shows and artist residency programs.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Students from across Iowa participate in this program, which results in the nomination of a finalist to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level. In 1996, William "Joshua" Burke, a vocalist and Opera Performance student at Drake University, was chosen as one of the two national recipients of this award.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS KANSAS

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Access Awareness Presentations — The executive director of Very Special Arts Kansas gives various presentations about Very Special Arts Kansas, and disability and arts education issues to professional organizations across the state to raise access awareness and as a fundraising and development activity.

Adopt-a-School Program — In cooperation with the Wichita Public Schools, Very Special Arts Kansas adopts students with severe multiple disabilities served by the Levy Special Education Center and provides the center with art programs, supplies and teacher training on a monthly basis. In addition, volunteers are available to assist with art programs at the center.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Very Special Arts Kansas received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to offer this course, taught by a registered art therapist, to graduate and undergraduate health profession students.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Kansas conducts one festival in Wichita on June 1, 1996. This festival is part of a multicultural celebration in collaboration with the Interfaith Ministries and the Multicultural Celebration and Education Association, Inc.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. Very Special Arts Kansas received a 1996 Mentoring Grant to learn about fundraising, program expansion and board development from Very Special Arts Minnesota.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Kansas plans to expand the pilot program at Wichita State University to include other colleges and universities across the state. The workshops provide preschool teachers with one credit of college training in th arts. From July 10 to 12, 1996 Very Special Arts Kansas will host a *Start with the Arts* teacher training session at the Wichita Art Museum.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Kansas coordinates a 10-week visual arts residency program for the veterans of the Day Treatment Center at the Colmery-O'Neil VA Medical Center in Topeka and the Wichita Veterans Hospital.

Volunteers in the Schools — This program provides specially trained volunteers to larger art classes in Wichita public schools that integrate students with and without disabilities. Ongoing consultation with Very Special Arts Kansas about library resources and adaptive devices is available to art instructors and volunteers.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Consulting services, referrals and other resources from Very Special Arts Kansas enable teachers across the state to submit students' scripts for consideration at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS KENTUCKY

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Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. During 1996, Very Special Arts Kentucky is pursuing this program at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville in the Expressive Therapies Department.

Camp with the Arts — Very Special Arts Kentucky is working with the Kentucky Housing Authority to develop a two-and-a half-day camp for students in grades five through 12 who reside in public housing throughout the state. This summer, 100 to 200 students travel to Western Kentucky University to experience music, dance, drama and visual arts workshops.

C.O.O.L. (Creating Outstanding Opportunities for Life Project) — Very Special Arts Kentucky continues to implement the C.O.O.L. Project. Students from public elementary and high schools design posters focusing on community and social issues. The posters are displayed at the gallery in the Capitol Arts Center during First Night Kentucky, a community New Year celebration of visual and performing arts activities and events. Murals created from the posters are available to travel to schools, festivals and community centers.

Exceptional Children's Conference — Each year, Very Special Arts Kentucky participates in the Exceptional Children's Conference, sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education for teachers, administrators and parents of exceptional children. Very Special Arts Kentucky participates in this conference by conducting two workshops: *Creative Strategies for Special Needs Students* for all teachers, parents and administrators; and *Start with the Arts* for preschool teachers, administrators and parents. Very Special Arts Kentucky also hosts a reception and art exhibit and provides entertainment from Very Special Arts Kentucky's participants during the three-day conference.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Kentucky conducts

festivals for over 2,000 participants in the following cities and sites: Ashland, Elizabethtown, Kentucky Center for the Arts, Kentucky Kingdom Thrill Park, Larue County and Western Kentucky University. Prior to each festival, educational materials are developed around a theme chosen by the site.

Four One-Act Specials — In 1994, Very Special Arts Kentucky partnered with a local arts center and community theater organization to develop and complete an enhanced Young Playwrights Project. This year, Very Special Arts Kentucky and its partners have been invited to perform one of the *Four One-Act Specials* for the fall meeting of the Kentucky Arts Council.

***It Can't Happen To Me* Video Project** — Very Special Arts Kentucky received a grant from the Kentucky Department of Education to produce a video to educate students about the realities and consequences of issues surrounding HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. *It Can't Happen To Me*, a video created by students, is a series of vignettes about Kentucky youth and the situations they face as they grow up. Once completed, the video will be distributed statewide to each school district and made available to nurses, schools and trainees in community services through the Kentucky HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Program library. This project is conceived in the spirit of KERA (Kentucky Education Reform Act), which puts students in charge of their own learning and offers an opportunity to communicate in ways that use multiple intelligences.

Legacy Program — The Legacy Program offers oral history exercises and arts activities to older adults at senior citizen centers, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other appropriate sites. Involvement in the program helps older adults reconnect with significant times in their lives, rediscover a sense of accomplishment and purpose and build meaningful relationships with other program participants. Very Special Arts Kentucky, in partnership with the Bowling Green Retirement Village, The Public Theater of Kentucky, the Kentucky Library and Museum, and Western Kentucky University Public Television, is developing a theater piece for public performances based on interviews with senior citizen. Very Special Arts Kentucky received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to implement this program.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. Very Special Arts Kentucky was provided a second-year Mentoring Grant to continue receiving training and assistance from Very Special Arts Georgia in the areas of fundraising and board development in 1996. Throughout the year, Very Special Arts Georgia's executive director travels to Kentucky to work with Very Special Arts Kentucky's staff and board of directors in developing effective and innovative fundraising ideas and creating strategies for diversifying the board.

Mini-Grants Program — Since 1994, Very Special Arts Kentucky has offered 24 $1,000 grants to schools across the state to develop arts programming that includes students with disabilities. Schools submit a grant application to Very Special Arts Kentucky. Many of the outstanding projects are highlighted during the annual Exceptional Children's Conference.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. In partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, Very Special Arts Kentucky conducts *Start with the Arts* workshops for schools across the state. Teachers participating in the workshops are eligible to receive in-service credit.

Traveling Art Exhibition — Since 1993, Very Special Arts Kentucky has displayed an exhibit of program participants' artwork during the Capitol Arts Center's First Night Celebration, a community New Year celebration of visual and performing arts activities and events. The traveling art exhibit, consisting of approximately 25 framed pieces created by students and adults with disabilities, is scheduled to appear in several communities across the state.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. In 1995, Very Special Arts Kentucky developed partnerships with a local arts center, two school systems, a local community theater group, the county Parks Department, and a university to initiate the Young Playwrights Program. *Four One-Act Specials* were produced at the Capitol Arts Alliance, Inc. Theater. Very Special Arts Kentucky continues to conduct this program throughout the state.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Very Special Arts Kentucky invites students from schools across the state to participate in this program. The state finalist performs at the Exceptional Children's Conference as well as other times throughout the year and represents Very Special Arts Kentucky at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS LOUISIANA

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Artist Residencies — Four artists are selected annually from the North-Central, Southern, and Eastern regions of the state to provide instruction in music, dance, drama and the visual arts in schools statewide. Approximately 750 students with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in arts activities under the direction of professional artists.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. Very Special Arts Louisiana continues to place artwork created by students and adults with disabilities in hospitals and health care facilities. Volunteers such as hospital candy stripers, Zonta Club members and Youth Arts Council groups assist Very Special Arts Louisiana with this project.

Cancer Society of Greater Baton Rouge — Children and youth with cancer, ages 1 to 17, from throughout Louisiana create artwork for display at the Very Special Arts Louisiana Gallery, located in the office building of the Cancer Society of Greater Baton Rouge. A reception for the artists, their families and friends is held at the gallery each March. Very Special Arts Louisiana hopes to expand this program by hiring artists to provide visual arts instruction to patients with cancer.

Exchange Program — The Very Special Arts Louisiana/Very Special Arts Italy Exchange Program was developed in 1989, prior to the first International Very Special Arts Festival held in Washington, D.C. that year. The exchange program is the result of an international partners program established by Very Special Arts to assist Very Special Arts affiliates in understanding the scope of our programs around the world. The relationship between Very Special Arts Louisiana and Very Special Arts Italy provides the two organizations with the opportunity to exchange administrators, teachers, Very Special Arts board members, and participants and their parents. Italian students with disabilities and their parents visit Very Special Arts Louisiana program sites each year.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Louisiana conducts

approximately 40 regional festivals annually in the following cities and parishes: Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyeles, Bienville, Bogolusa City, Bossier, Caddo, Calcasieu, Caldwell, Cameron, Concordia, DeSoto, East Baton Rouge, East Carroll, Felicians, Franklin, Grant, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson, Jefferson David, Jonesville, Lafayette, LaFourche, LaSalle, Lincoln, Livingston, Madison, Natchitoches, Orleans, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, Red River, Richland, Sabine, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Terrebonne, Union, Vermillion, Vernon, West Carroll, West Feliciana and Winn. Two statewide festivals take place in Shreveport and Baton Rouge annually, serving approximately 7,000 to 10,000 participants each.

International Learning and Technology Center: A Project of Very Special Arts Louisiana and Very Special Arts — In 1995, Congress approved funding for a state-of-the-art learning and technology center to be established at the Louisiana School for the Deaf in Baton Rouge. The Center is being developed in partnership with Very Special Arts, Very Special Arts Louisiana, the Louisiana Department of Education-Office of Special Educational Services, Louisiana State and Southern Universities, and Louisiana Public Broadcasting. The Center recognizes the importance of the Very Special Arts mission in its training, technical assistance and information dissemination.

Preschool Arts Training Guide — In 1993, an Arts Resource Guide for teachers and parents of preschool children with disabilities was developed by Very Special Arts Louisiana staff, eight regional coordinators and a group of consultants. The resource guide is disseminated annually to all 66 local educational agencies and education consultants in the state. In addition, Very Special Arts Louisiana collaborates with the Louisiana Department of Education to encourage local school districts to use preschool funds to hire artists to conduct in-service training using the guide and to serve as artists-in-residence.

Special Education Conference — The 1996 Super Conference on Special Education is a three-day conference at which Very Special Arts Louisiana sponsors workshops and presentations conducted by artists and art educators on a variety of arts-related topics. In-service and pre-service teachers, parents, administrators, and other interested participants gain insight on how to provide arts opportunities to students with disabilities.

Summer Arts Institutes — Very Special Arts Louisiana provides statewide in-service training and resources in the arts to regular and special educators upon request. In addition to year-round, in-service training, Very Special Arts Louisiana holds institutes each summer in three different geographic areas of the state, allowing teachers throughout the state the opportunity to attend. In 1996, three additional institutes are offered, totaling six summer institutes for approximately 200 teachers. The objectives of these institutes are to train teachers to provide arts experiences to students with disabilities; to foster dissemination of ideas and skills among regular and special educators; and to develop a trained group of teachers for potential statewide resources and in-service assistance.

LOUISIANA

Traveling Art Exhibit — Each year, Very Special Arts Louisiana staff selects over 100 paintings and drawings to be exhibited throughout the state. Student artists are featured at each exhibition and presented with awards for their outstanding works of art. Each piece of artwork is framed and becomes part of the Louisiana Department of Education's permanent collection. The collection is loaned to various sites for exhibits throughout the state each year.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Over 100 students in speech classes participate in the Young Playwrights program in Louisiana.

Youth Council — Since 1977, the Youth Arts Council of America (YACA) has participated in Very Special Arts Louisiana's festival programs in St. Martin, East Baton Rouge and Vernon Parishes, Breaux Bridge and Baton Rouge. YACA is a nationwide art club for teenagers. For the 15th year, high school student members are conducting various arts activities at district, regional and state festivals throughout Louisiana.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS MAINE

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Access Art Team — Very Special Arts Maine's Access Art Team consults and conducts curriculum planning with schools on a variety of topics, including the use of multiple intelligences, inclusion methods and the development of cross-curriculum teaching strategies. The Access Art Team is comprised of learning specialists and artist trainers.

Arts Allies Network — Very Special Arts Maine disseminates program and contact information about inclusive arts programs and activities for children and adults with disabilities.

Audio Description Training — Very Special Arts Maine conducts audio description training for audio descriptive assistants at theaters in Maine. Audio descriptive assistants provide audience members who are blind and visually impaired with a detailed narration of theatrical performances. Prior to performances, guests are invited to walk on the set and to touch the costumes to orient themselves with the play's surroundings. A full description of the set and the costumes is provided by the assistants.

Camp Signawatha — Each year Very Special Arts Maine participates in Camp Signawatha, a four-day camp serving people who are deaf and who have multiple disabilities. Programs are presented using American Sign Language and are designed to foster a spirit of community. Very Special Arts Maine conducts a T-shirt design project, movement and dance workshops. Using silk-screens and tie-dye on T-shirts, this project teaches campers the value of unique self-expression through art and design. Movement and dance workshops are provided to promote greater integration of participants who are deaf into community cultural programs and events.

Community Access Advocacy Program — Sponsored by Very Special Arts Maine, the Community Access Advocacy Program is comprised of a team of individuals who provide consultation to theaters, museums, libraries and other cultural venues across the state on how to become more accessible. In addition, the program assists people with disabilities in identifying accessible cultural programs and venues. Consultants provide technical support to make facilities physically and programmatically accessible by using innovative technologies and techniques. In

addition, by bringing together arts communities and people with disabilities, the program helps to create new audiences throughout the state.

Employment Training Through the Arts — Very Special Arts Maine provides job consultations, guidance from artists, art supplies and curriculum materials to adults with disabilities at employment training programs. The training assists program participants in developing their employment skills. Mini training festivals are provided at which participants take part in hands-on art activities and additional one-on-one training.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Maine reaches over 22,000 people at the following festivals: New Year's Portland on New Year's Eve, The Maine Festival of the Arts, and the Western Maine Regional Festival.

Goals 2000 and the Arts — In collaboration with the Maine Arts Commission and the Maine Alliance for Arts Education, Very Special Arts Maine identifies, documents and highlights innovative local Goals 2000 and Maine School Restructuring Projects which include the arts. These projects are featured as examples of "best practices" of arts in education programs through printed, electronic and video venues. Local arts leaders are identified and provided with technical support and training in the area of arts in education.

Literacy Through the Arts — The Literacy Through the Arts Program provides artist residencies and teacher training in the use of the arts as a tool for inclusion and innovative change in schools and programs for children with disabilities or at risk of failing in school. Very Special Arts Maine artists and trainers collaborate with the Maine Support Network for Special Educators to conduct training for teachers, artists and consultants at the Maine Support Network's Summer Academy and Winter Retreat. As a result of these meetings, artists and educators combine efforts to implement arts in education programs.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. For the second year, Very Special Arts Maine and Very Special Arts New Hampshire are conducting a reciprocal mentoring program in 1996. Very Special Arts Maine receives guidance on expanding their artist-in-residence programs, and Very Special Arts New Hampshire receives guidance in the area of conference planning. In addition, Very Special Arts Vermont was awarded a Mentoring Grant to receive guidance from the state directors of Maine and New Hampshire in the areas of program and board development, and all three state organizations assist each other in exploring new

funding sources. Throughout the year, site visits are made and resources are exchanged.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Maine conducts workshops for dance instructors in Maine who work with people with disabilities either in schools or adult programs. In addition to providing instructors the opportunity to voice their common concerns and to share helpful information, this forum allows them to network with one another and receive technical support.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. In conjunction with The Governor Baxter Early Childhood Outreach Program, Very Special Arts Maine provides hands-on early childhood mini-festivals across the state for parents and their children who are deaf or have hearing impairments. *Start with the Arts* materials are also incorporated into classrooms for children with and without disabilities at the Hall School in Portland.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS MARYLAND

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Arts Alliance Partnership — Very Special Arts Maryland, in partnership with Maryland Arts Alliance, is mounting a statewide fall 1996 student art exhibit. This exhibit is coordinated by the president of Maryland Arts Alliance and the director of Very Special Arts Maryland.

Artist Residencies — Very Special Arts Maryland annually places artists in public and private schools across the state to provide activities in storytelling, drama, music and dance for students with and without disabilities. This project is a partnership with the Maryland State Arts Council.

Bell Choir — Very Special Arts Maryland is the cosponsor of *The Bell Stars*, a group of people with disabilities, ages 13 to 35. Very Special Arts Maryland is working to increase performance opportunities for this group.

Benedictine Jugglers — Very Special Arts Maryland is working with a juggling team at the Benedictine School on Maryland's Eastern Shore to develop a teachers' guide and coordinate workshops which will present "juggling to music" as a creative art form to individuals with disabilities. Very Special Arts Maryland plans to bring this experience to sites throughout the state. Workshops are scheduled for Southern Maryland, Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Challenge Theater Partnership — Very Special Arts Maryland cosponsors a theater group comprised of youth and adults with and without disabilities known as Challenge Theater. Productions are presented at various sites throughout Maryland.

Eastern Shore Project — Since 1994, Very Special Arts Maryland has cosponsored a three-week summer workshop called *Doin' the Rock Hall*, in Rock Hall, Maryland. Ninety elementary school students with and without disabilities work with artists from throughout Maryland in visual arts, dance, drama, storytelling and music.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Maryland conducts

festivals annually in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, the Eastern Shore, Montgomery County and Southern Maryland, serving over 4,000 participants. Very Special Arts Maryland also sponsors numerous mini-festivals at individual schools throughout the state. The largest festival, which is in Baltimore County, is scheduled for May 31, 1996.

Genesis Project — Very Special Arts Maryland plans to implement the Light in the Labyrinth program in six Maryland-based nursing homes with a goal of successfully involving residents in two eight-week sessions of closely supervised and supported arts activities. Professional artists with and without disabilities will be contracted for the Alzheimer's focus groups, and an evaluation will be conducted.

George Project — In partnership with *Sunday in the Park with George* and the Mt. Vernon Association, Very Special Arts Maryland sponsors musical artists with disabilities to participate in special events held in the park at Mt. Vernon Square.

Montgomery Project — In the spring of 1996, Very Special Arts Maryland is initiating two new series of readings and workshops in nursing homes in Montgomery County, adding to an ongoing visual arts initiative.

Partnership with Sugar Tree Music — In partnership with Sugar Tree Music, Very Special Arts Maryland sponsors arts programs which use international themes for youth at risk and students with and without disabilities. Students learn folk dances from around the world and participate in instrument making. Each residency culminates in a music and dance festival.

Songwriting — Very Special Arts Maryland is working with a Very Special Arts Maryland artist to present a mini-course, *Songwriting as a Healing Art*.

Southern Maryland Wildlife Festival — Each September since 1991, Very Special Arts Maryland has participated in this Southern Maryland annual arts event. Very Special Arts Maryland visual artists exhibit and sell their work alongside works by renowned wildlife artists from around the country.

Special Art, Special People — A Special Arts Day is held in July in the city park of Chestertown through the collaboration of numerous community groups, school officials and civic leaders. Very Special Arts Maryland artists present performances, demonstrations and an art exhibit. The public is invited to this well-attended event.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Maryland implements *Start with the Arts* at various sites in 1996.

MARYLAND

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Maryland conducts a program with the Perry Point Veterans Hospital in Perry Hall, Maryland.

Visual Art Exhibitions — Each year, artists with disabilities display their art at exhibitions sponsored by Very Special Arts Maryland. These annual regional exhibitions include sites in various geographic areas of the state. A special exhibit is created each summer for the Maryland State Department of Education Board Room, and a Very Special Arts Maryland exhibit will be held at Towson University in conjunction with the State Special Olympics meet, June 7-9, 1996.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Maryland works with the state's school system supervisory network and the MANSEF administration to encourage statewide participation by distributing related materials and promoting the program.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Maryland issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. The state finalist receives a scholarship from Very Special Arts Maryland and represents the state in the Young Soloists Program at the national level. The state finalist is also invited to perform at various events statewide.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS MASSACHUSETTS

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Access Expressed! — Very Special Arts Massachusetts continues to publish the Access Expressed! newsletter three times a year. Designed to help develop integrated audiences for community cultural organizations in the metropolitan area, Access Expressed! features a calendar of accessible cultural events in the Boston area and includes book reviews, stories about Very Special Arts Massachusetts programs, and profiles of artists with disabilities. Printed copies are distributed free of charge to over 10,000 individuals, cultural organizations, businesses, foundations and disability service organizations. It is also available on audio cassette, computer disc, on the Internet, and through an electronic bulletin board operated by the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. It is estimated that the publication will reach 30,000 people in 1996.

Access Expressed! Directory — Very Special Arts Massachusetts produces an updated directory of over 120 cultural venues and presenting organizations with detailed information about accessibility. Over 40,000 copies of the directory are widely distributed throughout the state. Supported by funding from Raytheon, the directory is also available on the Internet.

ADA Mini-Grants — Very Special Arts Massachusetts, in partnership with the Massachusetts Cultural Council, promotes inventions which improve access to cultural programs for people with disabilities. Each year, Very Special Arts Massachusetts issues a Request for Proposals and distributes approximately $70,000 in mini-grants. Participating organizations match the state organization's investment dollar for dollar. Annually, over a quarter of a million dollars is invested in program access improvements to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Artist Residencies (Arts Impact) — Very Special Arts Massachusetts provides three- to four-week artist residencies to schools interested in implementing arts activities in special education and inclusive classrooms. In cooperation with classroom teachers, Very Special Arts Massachusetts designs a residency program enabling teachers to employ music, dance, theater or visual arts to meet the particular needs of students. This program is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the

Massachusetts Department of Education, and various state foundations and corporations.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. This program is implemented by Very Special Arts Massachusetts at Children's Hospital in Boston. Instructors and guest artists lead medical students through visual arts activities that the students conduct with their young patients. Very Special Arts Massachusetts serves approximately 55 medical students through this program.

Art Shows — Very Special Arts Massachusetts displays artwork in their office and in a touring Festival Art Show each year. The state organization also cosponsors an annual exhibit of student artwork at the Cambridge Art Association.

Community Access Monitors Training (1996 State Project Grant Recipient)— The Community Access Monitors Training program, conducted by Very Special Arts Massachusetts in collaboration with Tufts University's Boston School of Occupational Therapy and the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD), expands accessibility training programs currently provided by each collaborator. This program trains approximately 70 students at the Boston School of Occupational Therapy in the provisions of Title III of the ADA and certifies them as "Community Access Monitors" for the MOD. Program participants are trained to survey community facilities to support the rights of people with disabilities seeking access to the cultural resources in Massachusetts. A training curriculum is developed and training is provided to some of the organizations being assessed by community access monitors. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Art Massachusetts participates in festivals in the following cities: Boston, Holyoke and Worcester.

Multi-Arts Resource Guide Project — The *Multi-Arts Resource Guide* and companion videos demonstrate how educators can integrate the arts into special and regular education class curriculum. With the support of the U.S. Department of Education, Very Special Arts Massachusetts provides training to over 500 teachers in Massachusetts, teachers in the other New England States, and over 100 teachers in North Carolina and Texas.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program — Very Special Arts Massachusetts operates a Vocational Rehabilitation program through the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. This program focuses on the development of the employment potential of individuals with disabilities in the arts and humanities. In addition to receiving guidance on professional endeavors, participants receive one-on-one career counseling and support with resume, portfolio and skill development. This program provides participants with access to computers, fax machines and other office equipment as well as editorial support and the encouragement and advice of fellow artists.

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Convention Connection — 1996 marks the fourth year Very Special Arts Michigan collaborates with the Michigan Council for Exceptional Children to host a convention to train teachers, parents, artists and other interested persons to provide quality arts experiences for children and adults with disabilities. *Start with the Arts* in-service training is offered to preschool instructors. *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. A theater educational workshop is offered for persons working with older students. In addition, over 30 workshops in dance, drama, literature, media, music and visual arts are conducted.

Education/Art Outreach — Very Special Arts Michigan awards seed funds in the form of $500 mini-grants to schools, districts, and arts and health care organizations to implement Very Special Arts programs. In previous years, the awarded programs offered teacher training, artists residencies, student and professional performances, and art exhibitions.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 6,000 people attend Very Special Arts Michigan festivals in Detroit, Genessee, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Macomb.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. A team of artists and early elementary educators who attended a *Start with the Arts* national training institute implements the program in several Detroit Public Schools.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Michigan coordinates its fifth annual VSA/ITT Career

Development Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Troy and its first festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Grand Rapids. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides 100 young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Very Special Arts Michigan Art Exhibition — An exhibition featuring artwork from around the state tours various sites such as the Michigan Library and Historical Museum in Lansing, the Urban Park Gallery in Detroit, the Michigan Youth Arts Festival in Kalamazoo and several Very Special Arts Michigan districts.

Well Into August **(1996 State Project Grant Recipient)** — In collaboration with the BoarsHead: Michigan Public Theater of Lansing, Very Special Arts Michigan tours *Well Into August*, by Amber Pollina, recipient of the 1995 Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Award. This theater production reaches over 5,000 high school and middle school students during a 10-week tour and at least 2,000 adults, touring schools and community theaters. A professional health care provider leads discussion sessions at the conclusion of each school performance. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year Very Special Arts Michigan conducts a call for submissions and a juried review process to nominate a finalist to represent Very Special Arts Michigan at the national level.

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Art Access Training — Very Special Arts Minnesota conducts training for 130 art and music teachers, theater groups and other arts organizations on adaptive techniques for students with disabilities. In addition, Very Special Arts Minnesota conducts training for artists-in-residence on methods of adapting arts activities for students with disabilities. Efforts are underway to develop training materials or a resource guide that will be made available to participants.

Differently Abled Clowns of Minnesota (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — Very Special Arts Minnesota offers a clowning artist-in-residency for students in Northfield and Faribault at the Laura Baker School, the Minnesota School for the Deaf and the Minnesota School for the Blind. This program culminates in a public performance. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 600 people attend Very Special Arts Minnesota's festival in Saint Paul.

Information and Referral Service — Very Special Arts Minnesota provides an information and referral service to individuals, arts agencies and disability organizations within the state. This service provides persons with disabilities information regarding accessible arts opportunities in their community and informs arts agencies about individuals and groups who are interested in becoming involved in their activities. A goal of this project is to ensure that mainstreamed arts organizations become more accessible to persons with disabilities.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. In 1996, Very Special Arts Minnesota is

providing assistance and guidance in fundraising, program expansion and board development to Very Special Arts Kansas.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Minnesota conducts this program for 1,000 students throughout the state.

Twin Cities Arts Access Guide — Very Special Arts Minnesota and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC) coordinate the publishing of a Twin Cities Metro Area Arts Access Guide. Over 25,000 copies of the access guide are distributed and it is updated regularly. To obtain the information contained in the guide, Very Special Arts Minnesota trains 30 volunteers to conduct accessibility surveys of arts programs and facilities.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Minnesota invites over 30 veterans who have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder the Veterans Art Exhibition. This program is designed to enhance the veterans healing process as part of their recovery program at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Minneapolis. This program allows the artists to create an independent art show, giving them ownership in every aspect of the exhibition production process. Participants create artwork, build exhibition panels, maintain their studio space, document the entire production process on video, and publicize the exhibition and opening reception.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Minnesota's Artists Selection Committee reviews submissions and encourages young playwrights submit their work to the national level.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a

committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Minnesota issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program and finalists participate at the national level.

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Artcard Project — Very Special Arts Mississippi, in conjunction with the local Chamber of Commerce, developed postcards depicting local historical buildings painted by Lucy Rhoades, an adult artist with a disability. Because of the success of this program, Very Special Arts Mississippi expanded the Artcard Project to include prints of Mississippi State University's oldest and most revered buildings. Prints and notecards were also created.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. Artwork selected from Very Special Arts Mississippi regional festivals is loaned to hospitals. Patients are encouraged to select artwork to hang in their rooms throughout their hospital stay. Additional artwork is also selected to be displayed on the walls around the walking track of the Wellness Center. This project allows patients to exercise control over their environment and increases public awareness of the importance of the arts for all people.

Disability Awareness Training — Staff, board members and volunteers of Very Special Arts Mississippi travel throughout the state to make presentations on the programs of Very Special Arts Mississippi and other specific disability issues. Audiences are also invited to attend formal and informal training sessions offered by Very Special Arts Mississippi and the Mississippi Arts Commission that allow for ever-evolving training in disability and arts issues.

Emerging Artists Program — The Emerging Artists Program annually identifies approximately 10 adult artists with disabilities in the state who need assistance in marketing their works. A call for art is used to identify potential emerging artists, and a jury of professional artists and arts marketing professionals select five to eight artists for gallery exhibition. Resources are provided to assist the emerging artists with preparing a professional portfolio, making slides of their work, pricing their work, preparing public relations pieces and developing other skills to participate in the professional art world. The Pennebaker Gallery and the gallery at the Mississippi Methodist Rehabilitation Center exhibit the artists' works.

Festival Exhibit — Each year, a panel of Very Special Arts Mississippi representatives gathers artwork from the regional festivals to create a traveling exhibit to be displayed throughout the state at libraries, banks, museums and

schools. The Festival Exhibit premieres at either the Mississippi Governor's Mansion or the Mississippi State Capitol. The Festival Exhibit is also displayed for one month at the Mississippi State Capitol.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations, and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Mississippi conducts 18 regional festivals for over 25,000 participants in the following cities and locations: Batesville, Cleveland, Greenwood, Grenada, Gulfport, Hattiesburg, Hinds County, Iuka, Laurel, Madison County, McComb, Meridian, Mississippi State University, Oxford, Pascagoula, Poplarville, Rankin County and Tupelo. In addition, Very Special Arts Mississippi conducts its sixth annual statewide festival. Held at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum in the state's capital of Jackson, 7,000-10,000 participants and 500 volunteers take part in this festival.

Gerontology Program — Very Special Arts Mississippi and the regional office of the Area Agency on Aging plan to develop a program that partners young adult artists with clients in senior citizens day care centers and nursing homes in the Golden Triangle area. The artists will share their expertise with these clients. Over 600 adults with disabilities participate in this program.

Marketing Cooperative — Very Special Arts Mississippi serves as an agent for several artists and crafts artisans with disabilities. Their works are sold at Very Special Arts Mississippi booths at craft fairs, with proceeds going to both the artists and the state organization.

Procedural Manual for Festival Coordinators — Very Special Arts Mississippi continues to develop a procedural manual for festival coordinators with information that is specific to Very Special Arts Mississippi festivals. Information in the manual includes topics such as organizing committees, site selection, workshop ideas and financial reporting. Upon completion, the manual will be distributed at the pre- and post-festival training sessions for all festival coordinators across the state.

Santa Project — For the fourth year, Very Special Arts Mississippi plans to sponsor an artist(s) to conduct art activities for over 65 students in selected special education classrooms in the state. The artist works with the students and teachers in developing a Christmas ornament, usually a Santa. Each ornament is engraved with the initials of its creator and is identified with a hangtag containing information about the artist and Very Special Arts Mississippi. The items are sold at holiday craft fairs and other select markets regionally, with proceeds benefiting the Very Special Arts Mississippi regional festivals.

Very Special Arts Mississippi Choir — Very Special Arts Mississippi plans to develop an integrated ensemble involving over 75 youth and adults. Preliminary

plans call for the choir to be under the direction of Mississippi State University's Department of Music Education faculty and/or alumni in the area. Regional rehearsals will be held at schools, churches or community centers. The Choir will perform at venues such as the Very Special Arts Mississippi statewide festival, regional festivals and other events.

Very Special Arts Mississippi Recognition Ceremony — Very Special Arts Mississippi honors persons, businesses and industries who have been instrumental in helping Very Special Arts Mississippi achieve the successes of its programs. The ceremony, which features Very Special Arts Mississippi artists and performers, takes place in Jackson.

Veterans Program — The Very Special Arts Mississippi Veterans programs will involve over 230 veterans in Veteran Centers in Jackson and Biloxi. Both VA Centers are very interested in developing collaborative year-round community and out-patient programs. In addition, Very Special Arts Mississippi plans to develop intergenerational programs with the veterans and Very Special Arts Mississippi youth. VA Center directors will work with the regional Very Special Arts Mississippi festivals in their respective areas.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS MISSOURI

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Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. For the sixth year, Very Special Arts Missouri conducts the Artists Unlimited Project in cooperation with Services for Independent Living in Columbia. Approximately 20 participants in the greater Columbia area, ranging in age and ability, take part in this program. The program takes place in accessible facilities, rehabilitation centers, hospitals and housing facilities. Qualified facilitators from Services for Independent Living coordinate the project with the support of Very Special Arts Missouri district coordinators.

Creative Writing Project — Very Special Arts Missouri continues its Creative Writing Project, which is cosponsored by Services for Independent Living in Columbia and Jefferson City. Approximately 10 adults participate in the program, which focuses on writing prose, poetry and short stories as avenues of self-expression and personal growth. A qualified instructor leads two-hour workshops for eight weeks.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Missouri conducts four festivals within the greater Kansas City area, Saint Louis and Independence serving over 2,300 participants.

Mobility Outlook Newsletter — This quarterly literary magazine features writing by people with disabilities throughout Missouri and includes listings of Very Special Arts Missouri activities. This publication was initiated in 1995 by Jeffrey O'Brien, a writer based in Columbia, MO, with muscular dystrophy. As a sponsor, Very Special Arts Missouri provides financial and publicity support to this effort in order to expand the newsletter's distribution to libraries and schools across the state. A subscription to this publication is available through Very Special Arts Missouri.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves

people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Missouri implements the New Visions Dance Project for the fifth year, in collaboration with the Missouri School for the Blind in St. Louis. Led by a teacher at the Missouri School for the Blind, 12 one-hour dance workshops are given weekly for approximately 20 students. The workshops help the students to increase their physical strength, self-esteem and self-discipline. Students are eligible to perform at the annual district festival.

One-on-One — For the eighth year, Very Special Arts Missouri conducts this program, pairing artists with an individual with disabilities to teach a particular art form, such as playing a musical instrument, drawing or sculpting. This direct interaction with professional artists allows the participants to work at their own pace while learning new skills in the arts. Many of the participants perform or display their work at Very Special Arts Missouri events and festivals.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Missouri coordinates a Career Development Festival in May 1996 at the ITT Technical Institute in Earth City. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Missouri officially initiates the Young Playwrights Program in Missouri in 1996, expanding on past efforts. Very Special Arts Missouri conducts workshops in St. Louis for high school classes. Teachers throughout the state are encouraged to incorporate a playwriting unit into their curriculum with the help of the Teachers' Guide. Theater professionals from Missouri select the finalist to represent Missouri at the national level.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Annually since 1990, Very Special Arts Missouri has issued a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. Each year, Very Special Arts Missouri honors an outstanding soloist with a disability who has demonstrated

excellence as an instrumentalist or vocalist. The award offers the musician a scholarship on the state level and nominates him or her to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

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Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. This summer, Very Special Arts Montana plans to work with a Missoula nursing home to develop arts workshops for approximately 16 patients, focusing on the development of aesthetic awareness and individual artistic expression.

Arts Enrichment Classes — Arts enrichment classes and workshops are scheduled for approximately 70 children and adults with and without disabilities in Very Special Arts Montana's five site affiliates in Bozeman, Butte, Lewistown, Great Falls and Miles City.

Community Arts Partners — Very Special Arts Montana, in partnership with Opportunity Resources, Inc. (ORI), serves individuals with disabilities in eight sites throughout Montana. Six to eight week arts classes are preceded by training for artists and staff interested in providing arts experiences on a regular basis to people with disabilities in their communities.

Creative Writing Project (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — The Creative Writing Project is conducted for approximately 12 academically and socially at-risk teenagers who reside in Missoula's Talbot Centers, residential treatment centers for at-risk youth. The program allows students to explore their creativity through writing and encourages sharing of their own works as well as attending readings by local, regional and national writers of renown. Students are also encouraged to share their work with Language Arts teachers in their high schools. Instructor Sheryl Noethe, a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow and Scholar in the Schools, works with high school writing teachers to increase awareness of their students' creative capabilities. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Disability Awareness Month Arts Classes for Children — In cooperation with Missoula's IDEA PTA organization, Very Special Arts Montana presents a series of four workshops for 35 children with and without disabilities to provide awareness of the artistic capabilities of all children. This hands-on arts program heightens awareness about disabilities and allows students to work together cooperatively to build on individual abilities in an integrated setting. The focus of the three week series is on dance, creative dramatics and visual arts. Instructors for the series are

professional artists, who are trained and experienced in working with individuals with and without disabilities.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations, and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. During Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in March, Very Special Arts Montana conducts a series of festivals. Another festival is conducted during the Special Olympics State Games in Butte and includes three days of arts activities for state games participants and volunteers, as well as arts activities at the Opening Ceremonies. A juried art show features artists with and without disabilities. Other festivals are conducted in Missoula.

Missoula Museum of Art — Very Special Arts Montana, in partnership with the Missoula Museum of Art School, continues to offer arts classes for patients with head injuries. This class provides opportunities for development of artistic expression and growth in social and aesthetic awareness for participants. Works created by participants are presented at exhibits in the Missoula Public Library, at the annual Head Injury Survivors Conference and at the annual Developmental Disabilities Conference in Montana. Works are also selected for the Governor's Art Show and the Special Olympics Art Show.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Montana continues to provide New Visions Dance classes through the University of Montana's Dance Department. The classes serve as training for dance students interested in working with individuals with disabilities. Dance classes are provided for eight to 10 individuals each semester for 11 weeks.

Statewide Publications — Very Special Arts Montana's integrated arts activities and programs are regularly featured in the newsletter of the Montana Alliance for the Arts in Education and the Statewide Physical Therapists newsletter. Information about Very Special Arts Montana's activities is also distributed to the *Parents, Let's Unite for Kids* newsletter and the Montana Arts Council's *ARTIST SEARCH*.

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Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Nebraska conducts festivals serving 2,000 participants in Norfolk and Kearney. In March 1996, Very Special Arts Nebraska cosponsors a festival for people who are deaf or hard of hearing with the Nebraska Commission for the Hearing Impaired.

International Day — Very Special Arts Nebraska hosts its annual Very Special Arts International Day in April 1996 at schools statewide to celebrate the cultures around the world. Students at sites across Nebraska create murals depicting the event's purpose of increasing cultural awareness and appreciation of the ethnic diversity in their Nebraska communities.

My Home Town Nebraska Art Exhibition and Calendar Project — In May 1995, Very Special Arts Nebraska initiated a statewide call for art for the second *My Home Town Nebraska* project. Nebraska artists of all ages and abilities are eligible to participate in this program and are invited to create visual artwork to commemorate and celebrate their home town. Selected pieces represent rural and urban life in the communities across Nebraska. The *1996 My Home Town Nebraska* project provides an opportunity for selected artists to be recognized for their creativity and artistic abilities and greatly expands community awareness of the importance of arts programs for all people in Nebraska. Through the fall of 1996, the *1994 My Home Town Nebraska* Art Exhibition is displayed in state legislators' offices in the State Capitol Building in Lincoln.

Photodocumentary Project and Touring Exhibit (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — Very Special Arts Nebraska and Kent Klima, a photographer from Omaha, NE, who has a disability, are developing a multistate photodocumentary project in cooperation with Very Special Arts South Dakota, Very Special Arts Wyoming and other organizations. The goal of this project is to increase awareness of the commonalities of all people, especially artists with disabilities. The project also aims to increase awareness and greater understanding among the public of the special difficulties faced by Native American artists on their reservations. Very Special Arts

awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. In 1994, Very Special Arts Nebraska was chosen as one of four National Model City Training sites for the *Start with the Arts* national program. Teachers in seven schools implemented *Start with the Arts* activities in their classrooms during that school year. Very Special Arts Nebraska continues to provide training for teachers on strategies for developing interactive learning experiences for children through the arts. In 1996, over 600 preschool age students, teachers, administrators, parents, and artists in Educational Service Unit #3 in Omaha and 10 metropolitan area school districts participate in yearlong *Start with the Arts* training and programming.

Training Institutes — Each year, Very Special Arts Nebraska provides training institutes to 150 teachers and school administrators with a focus on Very Special Arts and Very Special Arts Nebraska programming, disability awareness, teaching through the arts and accessibility to the arts while making the arts inclusive to all people. Very Special Arts Nebraska also conducts numerous training sessions and disability awareness workshops for various audiences.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Nebraska issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. Very Special Arts Nebraska recognizes one artist for his or her outstanding accomplishments in music and nominates the finalist to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS NEVADA

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Advocacy Presentations — The executive director of Very Special Arts Nevada, board members, and district and local coordinators conduct presentations to over 500 members of service and professional groups throughout the state on the importance of the arts in the lives of all individuals.

Artist Residencies — Very Special Arts Nevada places artists in self-contained and mainstream classrooms to teach visual and performing arts. These residencies serve over 400 students throughout the state.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. For the past six years, Very Special Arts Nevada has sponsored visual arts programs for 175 seniors with dementia and Alzheimer's at six health care facilities in Reno, Sparks and Carson City. Artwork created by program participants is framed and exhibited at the care facility and throughout the community.

Art License Plate Bill — During the 1995 legislative session, a bill was signed into law to create and sell license plates to support of arts education. Artwork by a Very Special Arts Nevada participant is used for the plate design. Proceeds from the this project enables Very Special Arts Nevada and the Nevada State Council on the Arts to provide more arts in education activities.

Camp Lotsafun — Very Special Arts Nevada hires artists to work at Camp Lotsafun, a Lake Tahoe summer camp for individuals with disabilities.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 7,000 people attend eight Very Special Arts Nevada festivals in the following locations: Ely, Las Vegas, Lovelock and Reno.

Holiday Card Project — Over 350 students in special education classes create original holiday art for use on greeting cards. Last year FHP HealthCare distributed 5,000 cards which helped spread the word about Very Special Arts Nevada's programs and mission. An exhibit of the original artwork is conducted at the FHP Medical Center.

The City of Reno Redevelopment Agency uses Very Special Arts Nevada artwork to promote its annual festival of Trees and Lights on the Reno Riverwalk and exhibits them at Reno City Hall during December.

Lake Mansion Renovation — In January 1996, Very Special Arts Nevada moved its offices to the historic Lake Mansion, located on the grounds of the Reno/Sparks Convention Center. Built in 1877, the mansion was purchased in 1879 by Myron C. Lake, founder of Reno. The main floor of this building remains a house museum that is open to the public. Very Special Arts Nevada is assisting in renovating the mansion, to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and conducts on-site programming beginning in late spring of 1996.

McMillan Art Scholarships — In honor of Very Special Arts Nevada's founding board member Rosemary McMillan, Very Special Arts Nevada provides funding for adults and children with disabilities to attend art workshops at the Namaste Art School and the Nevada Museum of Art.

Murals Program — Artist John Coleman works with 550 students at ten Reno Schools to design and paint murals of dolphins, porpoises, seahorses and other scenes of ocean life. Each participating school is a member of the MARE (Marine Activity, Resources, and Education) program, developed by the University of California-Berkeley, which brings year-round ocean science activities to schoolchildren. At each school Coleman conducts art workshops for individual classrooms and lectures on marine life to full school assemblies. Students in the schools' special education classrooms are fully integrated into the project. Murals have been completed at six of the 10 schools, and the project has been expanded to include one of the Reno Housing Authority's family housing centers.

Nevada State Fair — For several years, Very Special Arts Nevada has worked with the Nevada State Fair in Reno to provide arts activities for children attending the five-day event in August.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. For six years, Very Special Arts Nevada has offered 15 adults with disabilities year-round New Visions Dance classes at the Sierra Developmental Center in Reno. The classes are conducted by a professional dance instructor, and program participants are given the opportunity to attend dance recitals and performances to learn more about the art of dance.

Reno Housing Authority — As part of a drug elimination program, Very Special Arts Nevada was invited to organize art activities for 40 students residing at the Reno Housing Authority family facilities during the Summer of 1993. Since that

time the program has grown to serve 100 students through weekly workshops in all five family housing facilities.

Reno River Walk — Very Special Arts Nevada collaborates with the City of Reno Redevelopment Agency to provide year-round arts activities on the Reno River Walk.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. In cooperation with the VA Medical Center in Las Vegas, Very Special Arts Nevada conducts an artist-in-residence program for 32 weeks at the Arville House in Las Vegas. The program culminates with an exhibition, performance, festival, or other special event to showcase the veterans' artistic achievements.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Through a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts, Very Special Arts Nevada collaborates with the Reno/Sparks Theater Coalition and a playwright to conduct workshops for 12- to 18-year-old students. Students write scripts for consideration at the national level.

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After School Arts — Very Special Arts New Hampshire holds a series of after school classes for high school students to work with artists, instructors and art-education students from Plymouth State College. College students receive credit observing and learning from this integrated arts class. After School Arts programming also takes place at the Derryfield School in Derryfield for students with and without disabilities, and a 20-week after school program is conducted at New Heights in Portsmouth. New Heights is an adventure-based after school program serving students from seacoast communities.

Artist Residencies — Very Special Arts New Hampshire places artists in six schools throughout the state to help plan and implement art programs. Through the resident-artist programs and workshops, over 200 students receive studio art instruction and are able to explore various art forms including theater, drawing, painting, printmaking and ceramics. Performances and special events offer the opportunity to exhibit student talent throughout the year.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Students at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical School in Hanover attend a series of classes taught by Very Special Arts New Hampshire artists and participate in a series of art activities with children and their parents at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. This program has expanded to include adult patients. Very Special Arts New Hampshire artists are invited to present on the program at numerous workshops throughout the year. Very Special Arts New Hampshire received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to implement this program.

Can Do Art Exhibition Project — Very Special Arts New Hampshire continues to exhibit *Can Do*, a traveling show of artwork created by Very Special Arts New Hampshire teaching artists, students, participants, and professional artists with disabilities. Exhibit openings incorporate performances by musicians with disabilities. A portion of the show titled *Please Touch* includes tactile works of art created by and for individuals with visual disabilities. As part of the state organization's permanent collection of artwork, *Can Do* is loaned and exhibited throughout the state.

Cultural Access Training — Very Special Arts New Hampshire provides access and disability awareness training for cultural facilities throughout the state. Training sessions are designed to assist staff in feeling more comfortable with hosting people with disabilities at their events and museums.

Evening Adult Program — Each winter, Very Special Arts New Hampshire offers art activities in music, visual arts and crafts for adults with disabilities at the Concord Mental Health Center. This evening adult program enables participants to sell their artwork and original notecards at a local holiday store in Concord during the winter holiday season. Also, a series of evening art classes in Manchester is held in the spring in conjunction with the local Artists' Association. All evening classes are open to the whole community and are fully integrated.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts New Hampshire reaches over 3,000 participants at more than 10 festivals in the following locations: Concord, Manchester, Nashua, Penacook, Plymouth State College, Spaulding Youth Center, League of New Hampshire Craftsmen Sunapee Fair, First Night New Hampshire Celebration and Portsmouth First Night.

In-Service Artist & Teacher Training — Very Special Arts New Hampshire trains arts and music teachers throughout the state to effectively include students with disabilities in their classrooms.

Legacy Program — The Legacy Program offers oral history exercises and arts activities to older adults at senior citizen centers, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other appropriate sites. Involvement in the program helps older adults reconnect with significant times in their lives, rediscover a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and build meaningful relationships with other program participants. Up to 100 senior citizens living in the Edgewood Center, a residential care facility in Portsmouth, participate in the Legacy Program. Using the theme *Places We Have Lived, Places We Have Left Behind,* an artist-in-residence conducts prose poetry and creative movement workshops to record the experiences of program participants. Very Special Arts New Hampshire received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to implement this program.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. For the second year, Very Special Arts New Hampshire and Very Special Arts Maine are conducting a reciprocal mentoring program. Very Special Arts New Hampshire receives guidance in the area of conference planning, and Very Special Arts Maine receives guidance on expanding their artist-in-residence programs. In addition, Very Special Arts Vermont was

awarded a Mentoring Grant to receive guidance from the state directors of New Hampshire and Maine in the areas of program and board development, and all three state organizations assist each other in exploring new funding sources. Throughout the year, site visits are made and resources are exchanged.

NHESSI Program — Very Special Arts New Hampshire offers arts workshops for children who are blind or visually impaired in cooperation with New Hampshire Educational Services for the Sensory Impaired (NHESSI).

Outreach Programming — Very Special Arts New Hampshire continues outreach programming by bringing performing arts productions to individuals with disabilities in the rural northern and seacoast regions of New Hampshire.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts New Hampshire offers this program to over 500 children in eight southern New Hampshire schools. In 1996, the program expands to include the Manchester Administrative Unit and the Plymouth School District. In addition, Very Special Arts New Hampshire hosts *Start with the Arts* conferences annually to introduce preschool and kindergarten teachers to the program.

Summer Job Training — For the third year, Very Special Arts New Hampshire offers two summer job training programs to Concord High School and Kearsarge Regional High School students. Each year, over 40 14- to 18-year-old students are employed to work with day campers with and without disabilities (ages 4 to 12) in area recreation programs and overnight camps. High school students work with Very Special Arts New Hampshire artists to learn a variety of art activities they can teach the young campers.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. In 1994, Very Special Arts New Hampshire collaborated with Very Special Arts Vermont to conduct the program at the VA Hospital in White River Junction. Very Special Arts New Hampshire continues to provide the program at the VA Hospital to elders and acute care psychiatric patients and their family members. Very Special Arts New Hampshire offers for the second year the *Art for Veterans in Hospitals* at Dartmouth Medical School. This course educates medical students on the importance of the arts as a tool to working with veterans and brings students to the VA Hospital to work directly with Very Special Arts New Hampshire artists and veterans.

Young Playwrights — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. For the first year, Very Special Arts New Hampshire implements the program at Odyssey House as part of their performing arts program.

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Art for Children with Autism — Very Special Arts New Jersey sponsors its tenth year of arts workshops for children with autism and their parents. Parent/child workshops are conducted under the guidance of an art therapist with assistance from college students or other professionals. These educational workshops emphasize the importance of creative interaction between parent and child. The program is conducted in Middlesex, Ocean, and Gloucester Counties. Collaborating partners include the Learning Resource Center of the New Jersey State Department of Education and Dreams For Tomorrow. Funding is provided in part by United Way of Central New Jersey and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Art Par Excellence — Art Par Excellence is a statewide touring exhibit of the works of children with disabilities, serving as a feeder for an exhibit of selected works of children with and without disabilities. The artwork is selected by school districts, and then matted and framed for touring. This exhibit was Very Special Arts New Jersey's submission to the 1992 Very Special Arts' national program, *The White House 200th Anniversary Art Exhibition.*

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts New Jersey presents four community-based and one statewide celebration of the arts for children and adults with and without disabilities.

New Brunswick Summer Arts Program — Very Special Arts New Jersey offers an after school arts program for New Brunswick children with learning disabilities. The program provides introductory experiences in music, drama, visual arts, and dance and is cosponsored by the New Brunswick Youth Services System and the City of New Brunswick.

New Jersey Arts Access Task Force — The New Jersey Arts Access Task Force, initiated by Very Special Arts New Jersey in 1992, is composed of individuals with specific knowledge and expertise in areas relating to accessible programming and facilities. The Task Force is a resource for New Jersey's arts community as they make structural and programmatic changes to comply with the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA). Training and technical assistance for the implementation of structural changes, the development of programs that include people with disabilities, staff sensitivity training and a newsletter are some of the services the New Jersey Arts Access Task Force provides. In 1996, the Task Force developed a questionnaire and statement of compliance, which is included with every contract sent to grantees of the New Jersey State Council of the Arts.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Each year, children with autism and their parents participate in dance, music, and creative-movement classes designed to increase communication and socialization skills. Each class is led by a dance or music therapist while volunteers from Glassboro State College and Rutgers University provide one-on-one guidance to each parent-child pair. The classes emphasize the importance of creative interaction between parent and child. New Visions Dance Project classes are conducted in Middlesex, Gloucester and Ocean Counties. Partial funding is provided by United Way of New Jersey and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Readers Theater — This unusual program celebrates the literary and acting talents of individuals throughout the state. Beginning with the Wordsmiths Competition, applicants are encouraged to submit poetry, essays, or short stories to a panel of judges. Winning entries are performed at a staged reading and reception which is open to the public.

Resource Clearinghouse — Very Special Arts New Jersey continues to serve as a clearinghouse on inquiries related to the arts and disabilities. To date, Very Special Arts New Jersey has processed over 3,500 inquiries including referrals of arts consultants for programs serving children with disabilities, information on current arts programs for people with disabilities, information on accessibility of cultural facilities, and planning arts programs for people with disabilities.

Spotlight on Access Conference (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — On April 13, 1996, Very Special Arts New Jersey cosponsors a conference titled, *Spotlight on Access: Integrating Performers with Disabilities into Community Theater*, at Villagers Theater in Somerset, NJ. This conference is designed to help even the most grassroots community theater open their audition, rehearsal, and performance process to all actors in their community and is targeted to meet the needs of theater administrators, directors, choreographers and musical directors. The event launches a one-year program focused on the integration of people with disabilities into community theater. The conference receives major support from AT&T Corporation, Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, and Johnson & Johnson Corporation. Sponsors include Villagers Theater, Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission, and Achievements in Community Theater (A.C.T.). Community theaters represented at the conference are eligible to compete for grants

to mount a production integrating actors with and without disabilities. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Storyteller Players — Very Special Arts New Jersey cofounded this theater company for adults with mental retardation in 1986. Administered by another organization for several years, Very Special Arts New Jersey is once again managing the group. Meeting weekly, the project includes workshops in various aspects of theater, led by professional artists representing the different elements of theater. Partial funding is received from United Way Central Jersey.

Unlimited Potential Theater Company — The Unlimited Potential Theater Company (UPTCo) was formed in 1988 to provide opportunities in all aspects of theater for people with disabilities. Members of this group perform and participate in workshops in theater improvisation, stage movement, voice, acting techniques, costuming, playwrighting and technical operations. Very Special Arts New Jersey sponsors the workshops and performances and provides company members with transportation to rehearsals, which are all held at accessible venues. In addition, sign-language interpreters are available upon request at performances, playbills are available in large print and Braille, and scripts are available on audio tape and in Braille. Under the direction of a new artistic director, the troupe plans an extensive touring schedule of plays for children and adults. Major funding for UPTCo is provided by United Way of Central New Jersey and New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Very Special Arts New Jersey/Arts Achievement Awards — Very Special Arts New Jersey annually presents awards to students with disabilities who have demonstrated a commitment to the arts, to educators and administrators who have developed outstanding programs in the arts for children with disabilities, and to individuals who have distinguished themselves through their commitment to arts education for young people with disabilities. Award recipients become candidates for the New Jersey Governor's Awards in Arts Education presented at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton, which is sponsored by the Alliance for Arts Education/New Jersey and the New Jersey Department of Education.

Vocal Music, Art, and Theater Program for Children with Developmental Disabilities — Cosponsored by the Mercer County Office for the Disabled, the annual ten-week music program has been enriched with the addition of a 10-week art program and a 16-week theater and drama program. The project gives young people with developmental disabilities an opportunity to participate in a musical program in which they learn songs, play musical instruments and develop skills in ear training, rhythm, reading musical notation and performance. The project culminates with an informal performance. The art component allows young people with developmental disabilities to express themselves through a variety of visual arts media, developing and cultivating the individual skill levels of all who participate. Elements of creative theater are explored through activities which

promote movement, special relationships and public speaking. Funding is provided by Mercer County.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts New Jersey issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. At the Very Special Arts New Jersey Achievement Awards each year, one artist is recognized for his or her outstanding accomplishments in music. The Very Special Arts New Jersey Young Soloists Award recipient is nominated to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS NEW MEXICO

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Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Very Special Arts New Mexico works with the University of New Mexico Hospital's Child Life Program to implement the Arts for Children in Hospitals as a non-curricular extension of the Child Life Program.

Buen Viaje Dancers — Very Special Arts New Mexico's locally initiated dance company, the Buen Viaje Dancers, is an affiliate of the New Visions Dance Project. Founded in 1982, the Buen Viaje Dancers is a group of individuals with and without disabilities who serve as ambassadors for Very Special Arts New Mexico. The company is cosponsored by the City of Albuquerque Therapeutic Recreation Programs and presents performances and workshops in the modern dance genre. *Opening Doors*, a documentary film about the Buen Viaje Dancers, premiered locally, and the videocassette was distributed to dance professionals throughout the country through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Produced by local PBS affiliate KNME, the original television special was awarded a Rocky Mountain Emmy.

Enabled Arts Center — The Enabled Arts Center serves as a hub for Very Special Arts New Mexico's statewide operations and as a demonstration site for its programming activities. Developed through local pilot sites of the national Employment Training Through the Arts Program, the Center is a community arts facility which houses a studio arts program, on-site gallery, and performing arts studio. Since its opening in November 1992, the Center has offered daily, individualized vocational and pre-vocational arts programs for youth and adults with developmental and acquired disabilities. The day program includes visual and performing arts instruction; apprenticeships; supported employment; performance and exhibition opportunities; career counseling; and venues for the promotion of artists' work. Permanent exhibit sites, including the Very Special Arts New Mexico Garage featuring numerous painted murals, are maintained by the Enabled Arts Center staff. The Center also houses training workshops and arts programs for community members.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts New Mexico conducts at least 10 festivals throughout the state, serving more than 6,000 participants of all ages. Festival sites include: Albuquerque, Alamogordo, Bloomfield, Carlsbad, Las Cruces, Portales, Roswell, Santa Fe and Shiprock.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. For the second year, Very Special Arts New Mexico is providing training and guidance to Very Special Arts Alaska in 1996. The two state directors exchange resources regarding networking within the arts community, and program and board development.

Native American Initiative — The Very Special Arts Native American Initiative provides opportunities for Native American children with disabilities to learn through exploring contemporary and traditional art forms. A collaborative effort between Very Special Arts and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the initiative promotes arts programming in BIA schools and culminates in a National Native American Very Special Arts Festival. Very Special Arts New Mexico hosted the National Native American Very Special Arts Festivals in 1991 and 1992. These festivals stimulate the development of initiatives such as festivals, artist residency programs, summer and after school arts institutes, and training for educators and artists. Very Specials Arts New Mexico continues to work with local Native American communities.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts New Mexico collaborates with the Bill Evans Dance Company to offer a New Visions Dance Workshop in February 1996. Charlene Curtiss and Joanne Petroff of Light Motion, from Washington State, are conducting the training for about 30 dance instructors at the University of New Mexico. The workshop focuses on teaching dance to adults with disabilities. The Buen Viaje Dancers participate in the training as well as 40 other university students. Additionally, Very Special Arts New Mexico is in the final stages of developing a dance accessibility videotape funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Very Special Arts New Mexico received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to conduct this program.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic

literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Preschools in Albuquerque, Ruidoso and Las Cruces served as pilot sites for *Start with the Arts* in 1992 and 1993. Schools in Ruidoso and Las Cruces have institutionalized the project and offer both teacher training and programs for students and parents. In August 1996, a training institute for parents, artists and teachers takes place in Albuquerque.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival and Program — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts New Mexico coordinates festivals and rotating art exhibits. This collaboration provides young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills, specifically in the field of computer aided design and electronics. ITT's facility and staff are available for tours and computer assistance, and a scholarship to attend the program is also offered.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Very Special Arts New Mexico issues a statewide call for entries from musicians. State finalists are spotlighted at local events, and a finalist is nominated to participate in the Young Soloists program at the national level.

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Artist Residencies — Each year, Very Special Arts New York places performing and visual artists in schools throughout the state to conduct residencies in different art forms. All artwork created by students during the residencies are displayed at local Very Special Arts New York festivals.

Early Childhood Multisensory Alphabet Awareness Program (1996 Technical Assistance Grant Recipient) — Very Special Arts New York-Buffalo received a Technical Assistance Grant to implement the Early Childhood Multisensory Alphabet Awareness Program, serving 110 kindergarten, first grade and special education students. Students learn songs and movement to identify letters of the alphabet and develop basic reading skills. Participants perform at a school assembly performance for students and parents and at the Very Special Arts New York-Buffalo Festival in the Buffalo Convention Center. Very Special Arts awards special Technical Assistance Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts New York annually conducts festivals in Albany, Buffalo, Dutchess, Plattsburgh, Potsdam, Syracuse, Suffolk and Nassau Counties. The Twelfth **Governor's Very Special Arts New York Festival** is an all-state festival conducted at the Governor's Mansion in Albany. Hosted by the Governor and First Lady, 500 children with disabilities gather from 10 cities. Albany middle and high school volunteers act as hosts throughout the event.

International Training Center Programs — Since 1994, Very Special Arts New York has overseen all arts activities at the International Training Center (ITC) in Thiells, NY. The programs include:

Regional Technology Center — Very Special Arts New York and the Rockland Teacher's Center collaborate to establish the Regional Technology Center with 12 new personal computers. Spring courses offered include *Technology for Special and At-Risk Populations: On-line; Using Internet Resources in the Classroom; Computer Conferencing;* and *Educational Courseware*

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Evaluation: On-line. Innovative technology is used to link individuals and classes across continents and cultures.

TheaterDance Camp — This camp develops students' skills in concentration, movement, mime, improvisation, dance and drama. The students work together to stage a full musical production that is performed at the end of the six-week camp.

Very Special Arts New York Ceramics and Pottery Program — This program is provided twice weekly for 12 adults with multiple disabilities and includes ceramics and pottery classes, pottery sales, vocational training and social opportunities for the participants. A ceramics artist trains staff and participants. Participants also learn to market and sell their artwork.

Very Special Arts New York Internet Art Gallery — Still in development, this computer service allows artists with disabilities to exhibit and sell their work through the Internet. This service expands communication possibilities for artists with disabilities, linking them to each other, special education programs, other artists and new audiences for their work.

Legacy Program — The Legacy Program offers oral history exercises and arts activities to older adults at senior citizen centers, nursing homes, long-term care facilities and other appropriate sites. Involvement in the program helps older adults reconnect with significant times in their lives, rediscover a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and build meaningful relationships with other program participants. Very Special Arts New York-Buffalo received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to implement an intergenerational program which pairs 30 senior citizens with 30 students with disabilities. A folk singer, a creative movement specialist and a visual artist conduct the residency at an adult care facility.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Each year, high school students with and without disabilities participate in modern dance classes at Very Special Arts New York's International Training Center. The Dance Visions Troupe performs at the Governor's Very Special Arts New York Festival and community events, hospitals and schools. In 1996, the troupe doubles in size and includes an adult component. Dance instructors Janet Furlow and Shirley Gobel Christie have been invited by the state of New York to present regional workshops.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS NEW YORK CITY

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Art of Grooming Program — The *Art of Grooming Project for Adolescents* is based on the concept that approaching grooming as a creative art appeals to adolescents and has an impact on the development of their personal, social and occupational skills. A training day includes workshops and demonstrations led by make-up artists, cosmetologists, fitness therapists and hair consultants. Participants also learn about dental care, diet and nutrition, and other related topics. The project sites include McSweeney Occupational Center, a Bronx facility for teens with a range of disabilities. Local businesses such as neighborhood beauty shops contribute to this initiative.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Each year, Very Special Arts New York City sponsors an array of festivals in all five boroughs. In this 20th anniversary year, students with disabilities participate in a wide range of festival performances and arts activities at sites such as Roberto Clemente State Park in the Bronx, Saint John's University in Queens, Snug Harbor Cultural Center in Staten Island, and Teachers College in Manhattan. Early childhood festivals for young children with and without disabilities are also celebrated throughout the city. Over 20,000 students, teachers and volunteers participate in Very Special Arts New York City festivals each year.

Mayor's Very Special Arts Awards — The Mayor's Very Special Arts Awards acknowledge and celebrate individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the arts or enhanced the cultural life of the community, particularly as it relates to persons with disabilities. The awards are intended to create and/or strengthen relationships between Very Special Arts and the political, artistic, cultural and educational communities of the city. For the fifth year, the Mayor of New York City presents the Very Special Arts Mayor's Awards. Award recipients are recognized for their accomplishments in supporting, sponsoring, highlighting or providing quality arts programs for the New York City community, particularly persons with disabilities or those at-risk.

Murals Project — For the sixth consecutive year, students with and without disabilities in all five boroughs of New York City work collaboratively to create murals depicting themes related to community pride and cultural life in the city.

The 1996 theme is *Celebration Time,* highlighting Very Special Arts New York City's 20th Anniversary. Student murals are exhibited throughout the city at various sites, including all Very Special Arts New York City festivals and the Tweed Gallery at City Hall.

Puppetry Pleasures — Introduced at Community School District 4 in Manhattan in 1996, the Puppetry Pleasures Project allows general and special education classes to participate in puppet making and creative writing activities and attend performances by puppeteers and mimes. Workshops in puppet making and using puppets as a teaching tool are also held for teachers, service providers and parents. These activities culminate with a Puppetry Pleasure Day, including exhibits, performances and demonstrations. This program is being expanded to other sites.

Seniors and the Arts — Participants in this program conduct hands-on workshops and gallery talks to children with disabilities and serve on planning committees and as artist consultants. Seniors are trained in an arts training program at St. Johns University. Participants in this program also plan and participate in all Very Special Arts New York City festivals. In 1996, the Seniors and the Arts program makes artwork by seniors available to senior citizens centers through the Artists Unlimited Project, which makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes.

They Are Special Too Project — Introduced in 1993, They Are Special Too project includes an art exhibit representing the talents of teachers and staff members who work with students with disabilities throughout the city. Participants exhibit their work and discuss their techniques at an awards reception.

Twentieth Anniversary Celebration — Very Special Arts New York City celebrates 20 years of festivals and programs reflecting the city's multicultural communities and people with special events, a Volunteer Recognition Day, retrospective exhibit, a commemorative pin and poster.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS NORTH CAROLINA

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As We See It — Originally started by Very Special Arts North Carolina-Cumberland County in Fayetteville, the *As We See It* program continues to be conducted with 24 students in Greensboro and Fayetteville who explore the art of photography. With assistance from Kiwanis Club volunteers, students learn photography using 35 mm cameras and organize an exhibition of their work.

Creative Writing Project — The Creative Writing Project is a national program that provides writing experiences in poetry, prose and short story to increase communication skills as well as develop self-awareness of individuals with disabilities in schools, hospitals and other settings. Very Special Arts North Carolina's Creative Writing Project continues to serve 1,000 students with disabilities at Pembroke State University.

Mayor's Very Special Arts Awards — The Mayor's Very Special Arts Awards acknowledge and celebrate individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the arts or enhanced the cultural life of the community, particularly as it relates to persons with disabilities. The awards are intended to create and/or strengthen relationships between Very Special Arts and the political, artistic, cultural and educational communities of the city. Very Special Arts North Carolina conducts Mayor's Very Special Arts Awards programs in Scotland County, Columbus County, New Hanover County and Union County.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts North Carolina conducts the New Visions Dance Project at the Governor Morehead School in Raleigh and Cumberland County Schools in Fayetteville.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their

artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts North Carolina enjoys a strong tradition of festivals throughout the state by conducting 58 festivals for over 32,000 participants in the following counties annually: Almance, Alleghany, Alexander, Ashe, Avery, Brunswick, Buncombe, Burke, Cabarrus, Catawba, Cleveland, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Davie, Edgecomb, Forsyth, Gaston, Gates, Harnett, Hoke, Iredell, Johnston, Jones, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Moore, Nash, Northampton, Onslow, Pasquotank, Pender, Pitt, Robeson, Rockingham, Rutherford, Scotland, Stanley, Union, Wake, Watauga, Wayne, Wilkes, Wilson and the Fort Bragg Schools. These festivals provide services through collaborations with public schools, state-operated programs, art centers, parks and recreation departments, art councils, nonprofit organizations, parent and professional organizations, business partnerships, university programs, and many volunteers and artists. In addition to the numerous local festivals, Very Special Arts North Carolina and Special Olympics cosponsor their second annual state festival. In collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Very Special Arts North Carolina hosts another state festival that is now in its 19th year.

Summer Institute Program — Since 1986, Very Special Arts North Carolina has cosponsored a five-day summer institute with the Exceptional Children Support Team. The purpose of the institute is to develop a cadre of teachers skilled in using the arts as a part of the education program for children with disabilities. Participants develop plans to teach curriculum content using the arts; experiment with various arts techniques, methods and media; and explore the advantages of implementing Very Special Arts programs in their community.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts North Carolina implements *Start with the Arts* statewide by holding the third annual training conference using *Start with the Arts* materials and demonstrations.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts North Carolina distributes a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program through the state music education association, the Division of Exceptional Children's Services, and the Very Special Arts North Carolina network. Durham, New Hanover and Wake Counties are sponsoring participants in this year's Young Soloists Program.

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Very Special Arts North Dakota currently is undergoing reorganization, with the goal of building a strong board of directors to lead it forward in providing ongoing quality arts programming for individual with disabilities.

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Artist Registry — In 1993, Very Special Arts Ohio developed an Artist Registry which lists the names of artists living in Ohio and their artistic experiences. The registry is updated regularly and is helpful in matching artists' skills with the needs of the community.

Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Very Special Arts Ohio offers this program to 70 medical students at the Ohio State University College of Medicine and 60 nursing students at the Capital University School of Nursing. Very Special Arts Ohio offers this program at Wright State University School of Medicine and Case Western Reserve University Medical School.

Audio Description Program — Very Special Arts Ohio assists in the marketing of Ohio's Audio Description Program, located at The Ohio State University Department of Theater. Audio description is a technique which allows persons who are blind or with visual disabilities to experience the performing arts more fully. By means of a portable transmitter, a small personal receiver and a tiny earphone, the audio description consumer listens to a trained describer share the visual elements of a production.

Avenue to the Arts — Very Special Arts Ohio's quarterly newsletter, *Avenue to the Arts,* highlights the state organization's programs and provides dates of upcoming exhibits, festivals and performances to 1,700 people.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Ohio offers festivals in the following locations: Akron, Athens, Brown County, Canton, Cleveland, Dayton, Findlay, Gallipolis, Hillsboro, Portsmouth and Toledo.

International Symbols Day — Very Special Arts Ohio collaborates with the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Center in Columbus to sponsor an International Symbols Day. Approximately 30 children ages 8 to 12 with disabilities and/or at-risk and their parents participate in this event.

Project *PARTnership* — Project *PARTnership* develops and enhances the self-determination and self-advocacy skills of adolescents with disabilities through the arts. This community-based program uses school and community resources to increase opportunities for creativity and skill development and assists young adults in their transition from school to work. Over 160 students participate in Project *PARTnership* at Wayne County Schools in Wooster.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Ohio conducts *Start with the Arts* for 1,255 students at schools in Athens, Austintown, Cambridge, Chesterland, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Crestine, Delaware County, Greenville, Kenton, Lancaster, Mansfield, Marysville, Monclova, Mt. Gilead, Orrville and Perry County.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS OKLAHOMA

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After School Program — Each year, Very Special Arts Oklahoma provides after school arts programming for approximately 85 students who are at-risk socially, culturally, educationally or economically. Ten monthly workshops are provided in music, dance, theater, visual art, photography and writing by artists who volunteer their time. The program culminates in a presentation for teachers, parents and family members.

Artist Residencies — Very Special Arts Oklahoma assists schools in securing artists-in-residence for yearlong programming. Each year, Very Special Arts Oklahoma helps approximately seven schools find appropriate artists to work with students with disabilities. Schools apply for assistance based on need.

Creative Writing Project — Three artists provide a series of creative writing workshops for members of Very Special Arts Oklahoma's dance troupe, Magicayah. Also, as an extension of the organization's Peace Seekers program, the Creative Writing Project includes programming at the Putnum City Alternative Learning Center. Since 1992, an exhibit of writing from this project has been included in an annual statewide showcase. Most of the children involved in the project are considered at-risk or have disabilities.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Oklahoma serves over 7,500 participants at 17 festivals in the following cities: Ardmore, Broken Arrow, Dale, Edmond, Lawton, Midwest City, Oilton, Oklahoma City, Pauls Valley, Putnam, Stillwater, Sulphur, Tahlequah and Tulsa.

In-School Arts Training — Very Special Arts Oklahoma conducts awareness training for all of the state's seven districts in order to help schools implement an Oklahoma state law that requires every school to teach the arts as a core subject. The regional workshops reach over 10,000 students and teachers and are conducted at no cost to the school districts.

Magicayah — Magicayah (Multisensory Arts Grow Inside Children And the Young At Heart) is a two-fold program featuring community workshops and a performing group. Magicayah workshops are developed for the total community: children and

adults with developmental disabilities; the teachers, healthcare workers and families of these individuals. Workshops provide a variety of arts experiences and are appropriate for individuals of all ages. The Magicayah Performing Group is intergenerational including individuals with and without disabilities, at-risk youth and parents. Performers combine music, movement and costumes into wonderfully magical presentations of fantasy. Ten performances are planned for 1996.

Murals Program — Very Special Arts Oklahoma's Community Murals Program combines the talents of gifted Fine Arts High School students with the talents of inner city elementary students from the Paseo community to form mentoring teams that create community murals.

Native American Initiative — The Very Special Arts Native American Initiative provides opportunities for Native American children with disabilities to learn through exploring contemporary and traditional art forms. A collaborative effort between Very Special Arts and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the initiative promotes arts programming in BIA schools and culminates in a National Native American Very Special Arts Festival. For the second consecutive year, Very Special Arts Oklahoma is the host of the National Native American Very Special Arts Festival. Red Earth, Inc. and the Kirkpatrick Center Museum Complex of Oklahoma City are cohosting the 1996 festival. Native American artisans provide workshops and performances for approximately 2,000 participants. Native American children from throughout Oklahoma and the country participate in this educational and cultural event.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Three established groups combine their talents with Very Special Arts Oklahoma's dance troupe Magicayah to present a recital featuring the talents of these special performers. Over 150 performers, artists and volunteers participate in this project, and the audience exceeds 1,000 people.

Seniors and the Arts — Very Special Arts Oklahoma collaborates with the University of Oklahoma to provide arts workshops for senior citizens in Norman, Oklahoma. Creative writing, visual art, music, dance and theater classes are offered. The project culminates in the spring with a citywide exhibit featuring artwork made by the senior citizens throughout the year. Approximately 30 seniors and 20 volunteers and artists participate in this project.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children

with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Special Care, Inc. in Oklahoma City adapts and implements the curriculum to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of Native American preschool children.

Uncommon Senses Project — In collaboration with the Oklahoma Public Schools, Very Special Arts Oklahoma provides workshops for school-age children, teachers, parents and professionals which focus on art forms such as visual arts, sculpture, painting, weaving, jewelry, photography and pottery. Special programs focuses on individuals with hearing impairments and physical and mental disabilities. The culminating event, the *Making Sense* exhibition, is a completely accessible display of artwork which includes something for each of the five senses.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Four Very Special Arts Oklahoma artists, including two veterans, work with patients at the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center. Journal writing, music therapy and clay firing activities are offered to occupational therapy and recreational therapy to stroke, amputation, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, chemical dependency and geriatric patients. Occupational and recreational therapists and medical staff are also trained in the art forms. An exhibit and performance by participants is presented at an ice cream social for patients and their families. Veterans participate and volunteer at community arts events sponsored by Very Special Arts Oklahoma, such as the National Native American Very Special Arts Festival.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Oklahoma implements this national program in two settings. The Oklahoma School for the Deaf and the Fine Arts High School contract with an artist-in-residence to conduct a series of playwriting workshops. As a culminating event, the schools perform their top two plays at local festivals. Very Special Arts Oklahoma organizes a jury to attend these performances and submits the finalist's script to Very Special Arts for consideration at the national level.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship

funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Very Special Arts Oklahoma distributes information regarding this program to every school in the state. The nominees are reviewed by a panel of jurors. A finalist is awarded a scholarship to continue his or her music studies and participates in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS OREGON

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Accessible Art Resources — Very Special Arts Oregon maintains a library of educational resources and materials on accessible arts programs for individuals with disabilities as well as special and arts education programs. In addition, state office staff is available for consultation in program development, public awareness, accessibility and training workshops.

Alzheimer's and the Arts — Since 1991, Very Special Arts Oregon has collaborated with the Legacy Health Care System and Good Samaritan Hospital to provide arts programs to people with Alzheimer's Disease and related disabilities. Weekly arts activities are provided in dance, visual arts, music, computer graphics and improvisation. The project's 1995 publication, *I Can Create! Arts Programming for People with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders,* is available to facilities and professionals serving this population.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 1,368 people celebrate Very Special Arts Oregon festivals in Medford, Pendleton, Portland, Roseburg, Salem and Union County.

Mini-grant Program — Each year Very Special Arts Oregon grants up to a total of $4,000 in seed money to local committees to conduct Very Special Arts programming to meet their community's unique needs.

Native American Initiative — The Very Special Arts Native American Initiative provides opportunities for Native American children with disabilities to learn through exploring contemporary and traditional art forms. A collaborative effort between Very Special Arts and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the initiative promotes arts programming in BIA schools and culminates in a National Native American Very Special Arts Festival. Very Special Arts Oregon partners with the Salem Art Association and the BIA Chenawa School in Salem to provide artists residencies for students.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Oregon, in cooperation with the Umpqua Valley Arts Council, offers this program at the VA Hospital Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation unit in Roseburg.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Oregon coordinates its fourth VSA/ITT Career Development Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Portland. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills.

Very Special Arts Clubs — Since 1990, Very Special Arts Oregon has offered Very Special Arts Clubs which provide integrated year-round arts classes and social time for young adults with developmental disabilities. Weekly club meetings offer participants the opportunity to explore music, movement, photography, pottery, folk dance and theater arts. Each club promotes the club members' accomplishments by exhibiting their artwork at local community festivals and scheduling performances for local civic groups. Very Special Arts Clubs are established in Corvallis and Roseburg and efforts are underway to expand clubs to Pendleton, Bend and LaGrande.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year, Very Special Arts Oregon issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS PENNSYLVANIA

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Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Pennsylvania, in partnership with the Arts in Special Education Project of Pennsylvania, cosponsors nine festivals in various regions of the state, serving 2,000 students.

Heart Camp — Very Special Arts Pennsylvania collaborates with Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh to provide arts experiences during a four-day camp for children with heart diseases and their families. A musical play, *Turtle Joe and the Five Wishes*, written by Linda Marcus, is performed for the participants. Campers also participate in follow up activities creating artwork based on the characters and events in the play.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. In 1996, Very Special Arts Pennsylvania is receiving guidance and assistance from Very Special Arts Florida and Very Special Arts Indiana in the areas of district development, board development, accessibility training and program development.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Pennsylvania implements this program at the West Shore YMCA in Camp Hill and with the Cumberland Dance Company in Enola. This project focuses on wheelchair dancing and is a cooperative project with the Arts in Special Education Project of Pennsylvania.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue

their children's learning at home. In cooperation with the Arts in Special Education Project of Pennsylvania, Very Special Arts Pennsylvania offers a two-day training institute in late June for teachers and daycare workers from across the state. Participants have an opportunity to become acquainted with *Start with the Arts* curriculum materials while working with artists in dance, music, puppetry, drama and visual arts.

United Cerebral Palsy Project (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — In partnership with United Cerebral Palsy Alternatives East, Very Special Arts Pennsylvania offers an arts infusion program to be used at United Cerebral Palsy's adult care facility in Steelton. The goal of this project is to enhance the job skills of UCP clients through training in the arts. The project includes a series of eight modules, each containing five weeks of arts instruction and one week for arts presentation or performance. The modules focus on a specific art discipline, including painting, pottery, decorative crafts, movement, and puppetry. Part of the training involves lessons in marketing artwork for display and sale, profiting individual artists. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Pennsylvania is offering a new program at the VA Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Pennsylvania coordinates submissions from students around the state to the national program.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Each year Very Special Arts Pennsylvania issues a statewide call for entries for the Young Soloists Program. Finalists are nominated to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS RHODE ISLAND

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Art Therapy for Adults with AIDS and Cancer — Very Special Arts Rhode Island collaborates with Hospice Care of Rhode Island and the Sunrise Community Housing Project (a program for homeless people with AIDS) to provide the physical, creative and emotional benefits of artistic expression to adults in advanced stages of AIDS and cancer. A professional art therapist works with participants in a variety of locations such as museums, hospitals, group and private homes.

Access the Arts — Each year, Very Special Arts Rhode Island receives financial support from the Rhode Island Department of Education to expand arts opportunities for special education students in kindergarten to 12th grade. Over 25 school sites across the state are served by artist-in-residence projects. Lasting six to 12 weeks, these residencies provide opportunities for children to work with professional artists and enjoy intensive participatory experiences in visual and performing arts.

Exhibits — Very Special Arts Rhode Island presents four annual exhibits of artwork by adult artists with disabilities. The exhibits are hung at the Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals; the Education Gallery of Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art; the AS220 Gallery in Providence; and the Wickford Arts Association Gallery in North Kingstown.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Rhode Island annually presents a mini-festival at the statewide games of the Rhode Island Special Olympics. The state organization also actively participates in Rhode Island's annual Labor and Ethnic Heritage Festival at Slater Mill in Pawtucket. Close to 3,000 people participate in Very Special Arts Rhode Island activities at these festivals.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Rhode Island supports the Rhode Island School for the Deaf Dance Troupe as they

expand and create opportunities for deaf students to dance with mainstream and community companies. In addition, Very Special Arts Rhode Island supports four Chance to Dance program sites in Warwick, East Providence, Pawtucket and Jamestown schools to expand dance opportunities for inner city youth with special needs. A culminating performance is held each year in Providence with an audience of over 2,000 people.

Poetry Project (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — Each year, Very Special Arts Rhode Island conducts a series of poetry workshops led by professional poets for adults with developmental disabilities. Very Special Arts Rhode Island is expanding the poetry workshops to five new sites in 1996 and increasing its outreach to individuals statewide, as well as to the permanent residents of Zambarano State Hospital. For the annual Poetry Festival, poets submit entries, which are judged by a panel of professional writers. At a public awards ceremony, entrants are invited to read their poems. One poet is selected each year to receive the annual Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award and to read his or her poem at the Pawtucket Arts Council Annual Poetry Event in April. Approximately 170 adults with disabilities are served through this program each year. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Project for Children with HIV and AIDS — Very Special Arts Rhode Island sponsors a storytelling and creative-dramatics workshop at a summer day-camp program serving children with HIV and AIDS and their siblings.

RISD Museum of Art/Very Special Arts Classes — Each year, Very Special Arts Rhode Island sponsors Saturday art classes for adults with developmental disabilities at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art. Classes are held each Saturday for six-week sessions in galleries throughout the museum, and include brief lessons in art history and instruction in a variety of media. A reception and public exhibition are held at the close of each session.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Rhode Island implements the VA/Very Special Arts Program by supporting poetry workshops and residencies at the Veterans Community Care Center in Providence. Veterans participate in these poetry programs as part of their therapy, and for their personal and creative growth.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS SOUTH CAROLINA

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Artist Residency Program — Professional artists, musicians, writers and performers are recruited and trained to work with children with disabilities in schools and facilities. A roster of artists is compiled, and these artists travel throughout communities in Columbia and Charleston to provide artist residencies in sculpture, music composition, poetry, puppetry and mural creations. Artists receive a disability training certification from Very Special Arts South Carolina upon completion of the program.

Artistic Opportunities for Veterans — Very Special Arts South Carolina and the Veterans Administration continue to support the Art of Coming Home project. From the streets, shelters, prisons and hospitals, veterans expand their artistic talents by participating in painting, poetry and quilting workshops. Artwork from this program is exhibited throughout the Columbia community.

Ceramics Art Workshop — Very Special Arts South Carolina annually provides teachers to train 30 adults with disabilities at Duke's School of Ceramic Art in Charleston. Opportunities in ceramics include painting, jewelry-making and collages.

Christmas Tree at Omni — Very Special Arts South Carolina participates in an annual showcase of decorated Christmas trees at the Omni Hotel in Charleston. Very Special Arts South Carolina participants create tree decorations for public display during the holiday season.

Complimentary Tickets — Four sites in Charleston receive complimentary tickets to arts events, including the annual Spoleto Festival. Very Special Arts South Carolina ensures that these tickets are distributed to over 100 adults with and without disabilities.

Creative Spark — Very Special Arts South Carolina provides music and art experiences for youth with emotional and orthopedic disabilities. These art opportunities range from concerts to interactive sculptures in the Charleston area.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their

artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts South Carolina conducts three local festivals for over 1,400 participants in Aiken, Darlington and Spartanburg.

The Gourd Project — Over 40 students from the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind in Spartanburg learn to plant seeds that grow into gourds and pumpkins throughout the year. When harvested, the gourds are made into instruments and art pieces that are exhibited and played.

Healing Icons — *Healing Icons* is an art support program that provides a series of six art sessions to cancer patients age 16 and older, helping them to find a creative way to cope with their illness and treatment. Each patient creates an icon, a personal object that shows how they feel about living with cancer, tapping into inner feelings and helping with emotional healing.

Jenkins Orphanage Music Program — Every year Very Special Arts South Carolina provides the opportunity for 25 students with disabilities from Jenkins Orphanage to participate in an ongoing music program. Students learn music appreciation and are able to experiment with musical instruments.

Pottery Works Program — In 1993, Very Special Arts South Carolina donated a utility building, kiln and potter's wheel to the Stevenson Correctional Institution to make the Prison Art Program an annual program. Very Special Arts South Carolina continues to provide arts opportunities for over 30 men at two correctional institutions in South Carolina. Inmates at the Perry Correctional Institution in Greenville create 25 clay pots to donate to the Stevenson Correctional Institution in Columbia, which serves inmates with disabilities. Inmates at the Stevenson Correctional Institution decorate each clay pot and fill it with flowers grown at the Institution's horticultural center; the finished pots are distributed to residents of the Dowdy Garden Nursing Home.

Project Assistance — Very Special Arts South Carolina assists many organizations, students and artists by providing art supplies for various art programs for individuals with disabilities, field trips to events such as a Columbia Civic Ballet performance, complimentary tickets to the Spoleto Festival, assistance to inner-city summer arts programs, instruments for schools, and funding for silk-screening cards to promote deaf awareness.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS SOUTH DAKOTA

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Artist Bank — The Artist Bank is designed to build a roster of artists with and without disabilities that can be called upon for festivals and programs of Very Special Arts South Dakota and other organizations. Artists from this directory travel statewide to conduct arts programs in schools and community settings.

Arts in the Parks Programs — As a means of providing positive arts experiences during the summer in locations other than a school, agency or institution, Very Special Arts South Dakota, in cooperation with Park Departments in Aberdeen, Pierre, Rapid City and Sioux Falls, coordinates a variety of workshops which are held in community parks. These workshops are conducted by professional artists and include young people of all abilities.

Employment Training Through the Arts — This year marks the fifth year Employment Training Through the Arts is conducted in South Dakota. Very Special Arts South Dakota conducts residencies using theater as a means to improve the professional social and personal skills of adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities. Over 170 people with and without disabilities participate in workshops that teach skills such as interviewing techniques and appropriate behavior in the workplace. Sessions are designed to enhance work-related social skills necessary for developing self-esteem, positive interaction, communication, initiative and increased productivity to realize a sense of achievement.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts South Dakota conducts six festivals for over 3,300 participants in the following communities: Custer, Rapid City, Redfield, Sioux Falls, Spearfish and Yankton.

Kids On The Block — *Kids On The Block* is an educational performance utilizing puppet characters with disabilities to increase audience awareness and understanding of people with disabilities. The puppet characters interact with audience members while addressing questions about disabilities and other issues of social concern. The troupe of volunteer puppeteers has become very popular in South Dakota. Very Special Arts South Dakota presents *Kids On The Block* at 40 sites, including schools and malls, reaching over 3,000 students and adults with and without disabilities.

Special Education Arts for Life (SEAL) — *Special Education Arts for Life (SEAL)* is a joint project between Very Special Arts South Dakota and the South Dakota Council on the Arts (SDCA) Arts-in-Education program. The program provides arts experiences for pre-kindergarten through adults with and without disabilities, using artists from the SDCA Artist-In-Schools program and the Very Special Arts South Dakota Artist Bank. The SEAL project encourages participants to express themselves creatively and to build positive self-image. Throughout the year, artists conduct residencies in institutions, public and tribal schools.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Very Special Arts South Dakota issues a call for entries across the state.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS TENNESSEE

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Arts for Children in Hospitals — The Arts for Children in Hospitals program educates health care professionals about the importance of the arts as a communication tool with children. As part of this college-level course, medical students work side-by-side with their pediatric patients on art projects which build trust and encourage children to talk about their hospital experiences. Very Special Arts Tennessee is currently working with Vanderbilt University Medical Center to establish the Arts For Children in Hospitals program.

College Scholarships — In 1995, Very Special Arts Tennessee developed an arts scholarship program for individuals with disabilities. The scholarships continue to provide opportunities for recipients to audit or attend college classes toward a degree.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Every year, Very Special Arts Tennessee hosts arts festivals and workshops throughout the state for individuals with disabilities, teachers and supporters.

Music and Art Scholarship Program — Very Special Arts Tennessee seeks personal grants in the names of entertainment personalities and companies for individuals with disabilities to pursue music and art lessons. It is hoped that these scholarship opportunities will encourage better integration between the professional arts and entertainment and the disability communities.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Tennessee continues to establish arts programs in veterans hospitals and facilities around the state.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS TEXAS

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America in Concert Program — Very Special Arts Texas conducts the America in Concert Program at the Coca Cola Starplex Amphitheater in Dallas to promote the importance of the arts, particularly music, in the lives of people with disabilities. Guests at the pre-concert reception include 100 to 200 community leaders, members of the media, national entertainers, artists with disabilities, and members of populations with special needs.

Artists Unlimited Project — The Artists Unlimited Project makes visual artwork created by Very Special Arts participants available to area hospitals and nursing homes. Fifty patients at Saint David's Rehabilitation Center participate in a therapeutic art program in which they create visual artwork for exhibition. Areas throughout the Rehabilitation Center serve as Very Special Arts Texas galleries to increase public awareness of the intrinsic value of the arts in rehabilitation programs. Patients' works are displayed at the Rehabilitation Center throughout the year.

Artreach Dallas — Each year, thousands of donated tickets for arts and cultural activities are provided by Very Special Arts Texas-Dallas to arts patrons with disabilities, low incomes, and to elderly patrons. In addition, Artreach Dallas presents the annual *Reflections of Artreach* exhibit, which showcases the artwork of program participants.

Arts with a Heart — *Arts with a Heart* was piloted in 1994 by Very Special Arts Texas in conjunction with Rainbow Days, Inc., The Dallas Theater Center, Dallas Independent School District and the Texas Girl Scouts. The collaborative program addresses the needs of underserved children living in Dallas-area homeless shelters. By providing nurturing programs with access to art, education and recreational services, Arts with a Heart reaches more than 300 children each summer through camps, weekend workshops, and Saturday field trips.

Express Yourself Program — Very Special Arts Texas collaborates with the Texas School for the Deaf to implement the multimedia art program *Express Yourself* for deaf students throughout Texas. Elementary, middle and high school students are invited annually to participate in the categories of traditional painting, computer art, sculpture and mixed media. Teachers are encouraged to make this program a class project. Several pieces of artwork are selected for exhibition at Very Special Arts Texas festivals each spring. The artists creating these pieces also receive a U.S. Savings Bond.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Each year, volunteers from Waco staff the "Puppet Factory" at the Brazos River Festival and the Global Festival, serving approximately 800 children. Very Special Arts Texas also reaches over 31,000 people by conducting festivals in the following cities: Austin, Beaumont, Dallas, Grapevine/Colleyville, Houston, Hurst, LaPorte, Pasadena, Plano, Victoria, Waco and Wichita Falls.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Teachers from five Head Start classrooms in LaPorte, serving approximately 125 preschool children, work with visiting artists to create meaningful art and learning experiences using *Start with the Arts*.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS UTAH

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Artist Residencies and In-Service Workshops — Contracting with the Utah State Office of Education, Very Special Arts Utah offers a variety of arts residencies including visual arts, dance, mime, sculpture and music at sites across the state. These residencies offer arts instruction and opportunities to children and adults with and without disabilities in special education classrooms, schools and community organizations. Residencies usually last a minimum of five days and a maximum of nine months and must be accompanied by in-service workshops for teachers. Very Special Arts Utah also offers in-service training in adaptive arts methods for special education and regular education teachers. In addition, Very Special Arts Utah collaborates with the Utah Arts Council Arts in Education (AIE) program by providing special education teachers to train artists from the AIE Artists Bank in working more effectively with students with disabilities.

Artists Unlimited Project — Very Special Arts Utah markets artwork created by individuals with disabilities as part of the Art Access Gallery program. Under the auspices of the Utah Arts Council, Very Special Arts Utah curates special exhibits, which travel throughout the state to schools, hospitals, community centers and libraries. Exhibits on tour include *eightysomething*, featuring the artwork of five artists over the age of 80 who are still actively producing quality art, and *Inclusion: A Collaborative Exhibition*, featuring the work of 12 professional artists and children with disabilities and from underserved populations.

Educator Incentive Awards — Each year, in conjunction with the Utah State Office of Education, Very Special Arts Utah offers up to nine monetary awards to teachers who submit proposals to adapt the State Fine Arts Core Curriculum for students with disabilities. At the end of the project, the winning teachers submit a copy of their newly developed curriculum to Very Special Arts Utah where they become a resource to other educators needing assistance. Winning teachers share their projects within their own schools and districts.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Utah conducts festivals for over 3,000 participants at Jordan Valley School in the Jordan School District, the

North and South Davis School Districts, Hartvigsen School in the Granite District, and Rose Park Elementary in the Salt Lake City District.

Gallery — Very Special Arts galleries showcase the creative talents of professional and emerging artists with disabilities through exhibition and sale of art work. Since 1991, over 9,000 people have visited Art Access, the Very Special Arts Utah Gallery located in downtown Salt Lake City. The Art Access Gallery embraces the philosophy of inclusion by featuring works by both well-known and emerging artists, artists with and without disabilities, exhibits speaking to social issues, children's exhibits, and exhibits focusing on and/or presented by underserved groups, organizations and individuals. The gallery also opens a path into the mainstream of the arts community for many of the individuals who participate in Very Special Arts Utah programs. It provides Very Special Arts Utah a strong presence in Salt Lake City and exposes its philosophy to the general public. A varied and balanced schedule of approximately eight to nine exhibits is shown annually. The Art Access Gallery works with the Salt Lake City government in organizing a yearly exhibition at the City/County Building, focusing on disability awareness issues. Works of art created by artists associated with the gallery are purchased and added to a permanent collection for the purpose of exhibition at local agencies.

Mentoring Program — Very Special Arts awards Mentoring Grants to executive directors of Very Special Arts state organizations to provide an opportunity to learn from the strengths of fellow directors and to develop a forum for the sharing of programming and organizational ideas. Very Special Arts Utah, which operates the Art Access Gallery, was awarded a 1996 grant to share its expertise on gallery operations with Washington Very Special Arts and assist in the development of the artsJAM!© Gallery & Cafe.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Utah, in partnership with the Children's Dance Theater of the University of Utah, developed a New Visions Dance Project which provides children with disabilities who receive physical therapy the opportunity to explore dance and creative movement in a studio setting. Very Special Arts Utah received a 1996 grant from Very Special Arts to conduct this program.

PARTNERS: A Visual Artist Mentoring Program — Having successfully piloted the Partners program in 1995, Very Special Arts Utah continues to conduct this highly specialized program, which identifies adult artists with disabilities who desire assistance with their artistic development. Through this program, the emerging artist is given the opportunity to work one-on-one with a professional artist in order to further develop artistic techniques, learn the intricacies of professionalism, make vital connections in the local arts community and foster growth as an artist. The

culminating event of this mentorship is an exhibition in the Art Access Gallery, which showcases the work of both the emerging artists and their mentors.

Second West Acting Company — Very Special Arts Utah sponsors a group of adults with and without disabilities who meet weekly in the Very Special Arts Utah Art Access Gallery in order to write scripts, rehearse plays and socialize. Working with theater professionals to learn about stage settings, props and development of ideas for script writing, the group presents several performances each year.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Utah provides arts programming and curriculum for children in Our House, a child care and education center for the Homeless Children's Foundation. Many of the children attending Our House have developmental disabilities. With support from the Utah State Office of Education, Very Special Arts Utah funds 10 artists to provide *Start with the Arts* experiences for the children of Our House and training for the teachers and staff.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS VERMONT

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Art from the Heart — Each week, Very Special Arts Vermont artists and volunteers provide visual art workshops for children of the pediatric unit at Fletcher Allen Hospital in Burlington. Using paint, artists and volunteers facilitate the artistic expression of the hospitalized youth.

Arts Access Initiatives — Spearheaded by the Vermont Council on the Arts, a Very Special Arts Vermont representative accompanies Access Resource Team (ART) members to provide on-site assistance to arts organizations receiving funding from the state. ART members work with staff and the board of directors to create a plan of action for increasing the site's programmatic and physical accessibility. Teams are made up of people with varying backgrounds including arts administrators, access specialists, artists, and individuals with personal experience with disability.

Can Do Arts — Very Special Arts Vermont provides a variety of arts services in collaboration with Howard Community Services in Chittenden County, the largest mental health and family services provider in the county. Howard Community Services contracts with Very Special Arts Vermont to lead eight six-week sessions in music, movement, folk-singing and puppetry. Each program is integrated and has approximately 30 participants, including staff, family members, volunteers and community members with and without disabilities.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Vermont conducts 15 festivals serving over 20,000 people in the following locations: Addison, Burlington, Chittenden, Killington, Montpelier, Saint Johnsbury, Rutland and Windsor.

Global Awakenings Project — Very Special Arts Vermont initiated the Global Awakening Project in 1996. In collaboration with Lawrence Barnes Elementary School, Sara Holbrooke Community Center, and Voices of Youth Vermont, Very Special Arts Vermont educates students about the artistic culture and heritage of Burlington's many immigrant populations, particularly those of Vietnamese descent.

Home in Arts Project — For the fifth consecutive year, Very Special Arts Vermont is collaborating with the Moveable Arts Academy to provide art opportunities for children ages 5 to 10 whose families are involved in the Committee on Temporary Shelter's *Families in Transition Program* in Burlington. Artistic initiatives are determined by the children and always have a component of "giving back" to the community. Projects include substance-abuse prevention theater performances and the making of murals by older youth mentors and younger children just entering the social rehabilitation system.

Special Arts Partnerships (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — In collaboration with Parent to Parent (a statewide support and information network for families with children who are chronically ill or have disabilities), arts organizations, and local social service agencies, Very Special Arts Vermont has expanded ArtsAbility workshops to three rural or underserved regions of Vermont. ArtsAbility consists of movement, poetry and storytelling workshops for children with chronic illnesses and their parents, siblings and friends. This program is expected to reach over 200 people statewide. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

Training with the Arts — Very Special Arts Vermont trains artists to train teachers to help use the arts as a way to make classroom curriculums more accessible to students with a variety of disabilities. Workshops are made available to schools and districts, as well as staff in a variety of professions, to enhance the professional interactions they have with the people they serve. Very Special Arts Vermont expanded this program by offering art training to non-art professionals in human service organizations.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS VIRGINIA

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Bell Choir Program — The Very Special Arts Virginia Bell Choir Program offers children and adults with disabilities an opportunity to participate in a meaningful musical experience where each individual can succeed according to his or her ability. The music program is designed to facilitate creative expression, community awareness and social integration. The bell choir accommodates a wide range of cognitive abilities, thus providing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to join in a common musical experience with their nondisabled peers or with those who have other disabilities. Also, more than any other musical experience or ensemble, the acti y develops and supports a sense of community, mutual respect, fellowship and teamwork. In 1996, eight choir directors and 14 choirs from Richmond, Lynchburg, Virginia Beach, Winchester and Loudoun County participate in the Bell Choir Program.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Virginia conducts festivals at three sites: Virginia Beach, Winchester and Harrisonburg, representing 11 festival days. The second annual Adult Very Special Arts Festival, a partnership between Very Special Arts-Virginia Beach and the Virginia Beach Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, is held in 1996 and serves over 700 participants.

Gallery — Very Special Arts galleries showcase the creative talents of professional and emerging artists with disabilities through exhibition and sale of art work. The Very Special Arts Virginia Gallery presents six exhibitions in 1996. The Gallery is located in the Shockoe Bottom Arts Center, where the organization is based. The Center is Richmond's newest fully accessible arts and cultural center and attracts thousands of visitors to its monthly exhibits and special events. The gallery, which also includes a gift shop, allows Very Special Arts Virginia to promote its programs as well as artists with disabilities.

Local Programs — Very Special Arts Virginia district committees plan and implement various activities including art exhibitions, after-school programs, benefits and fundraising activities, presentations at conferences and civic groups, and other public relations efforts to promote Very Special Arts at the local level.

Theater Program — Very Special Arts Virginia Theater offers opportunities for people with disabilities, their families and friends to perform together in an

integrated setting. The productions include volunteers who dress in black and act as "shadows" to silently assist actors when needed. Other volunteers design and make costumes, build sets and provide musical accompaniment. In 1996, Very Special Arts Virginia-Loudoun County presents *Daniel Boone in the Old Dominion*, an original play written and directed by Alice Power; Very Special Arts Virginia-Winchester and the Handley High School Drama Club produces its third play, *Hansel and Gretel*; and Very Special Arts Virginia-Virginia Beach produces *Grease*.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. In 1996, Very Special Arts Virginia implements *Start with the Arts* in one school in Richmond.

The da Vinci Project (1996 State Project Grant Recipient) — An extension of the Very Special Arts Virginia Gallery and Gift Shop, the new *da Vinci Project* offers artists with disabilities a nurturing environment to create, exhibit and to be a part of the Richmond arts community. Participants develop their craft, interact with other artists, and sell their art while being serviced by a staff aware of their special needs and able to facilitate their artistic endeavors. Activities include an Open Studio for participants who wish to work on their own and a series of five-hour Saturday Art Workshops staffed by professional artist mentors. Very Special Arts awards State Project Grants to Very Special Arts state organizations to encourage the creation of innovative arts programs for people with disabilities, with a focus on collaborations with other community organizations.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS WASHINGTON

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Artist Residencies — For over 10 years, Very Special Arts Washington has collaborated with the Washington State Arts Commission to conduct artists residencies for over 1,500 students with disabilities in self-contained classes, resource rooms and integrated programs statewide. The residencies are conducted by professional artists who are experienced in working with students with disabilities. In addition, teacher workshops on adapting arts activities for students with disabilities are provided.

The Arts Access Response Team (AART) — Originally a collaborative, two-year project with Artists Unlimited (AU), AART has become an exclusive program of Very Special Arts Washington. A technical assistance team provides resource referral and consultation to groups and individuals seeking to make the arts more accessible in Washington state. The members of this team are professionals with a wide range of expertise, including education, arts, disability advocacy, adaptive technology and techniques, arts administration, fundraising and promotions.

Directory of Artists — In 1993, Very Special Arts Washington produced a directory of artists with disabilities. The directory is updated regularly and enables Very Special Arts Washington to communicate job and training opportunities to artists with disabilities as well as create a resource bank to help potential employers comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Very Special Arts Washington provides information to state and local arts agencies, art galleries and museums, parks and recreation departments, and organizations serving people with disabilities locally and nationally. The directory helps many artists to find jobs and other opportunities.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities share their artistic accomplishments with the public. The 12th annual *Artspring*, Very Special Arts Washington's model festival, employs 95 artists and serves 1,525 participants. In addition to *Artspring*, Very Special Arts Washington conducts festivals in Puyallup, Lakeville, Oroville and Tacoma.

No Boundaries Art Exhibit — *No Boundaries* is a touring art exhibit that features work by professional and aspiring visual artists with disabilities. Now in its fifth year, *No Boundaries* includes the work of 33 artists from the Northwest region of the United States. Since its inception, the exhibit has toured to several sites in Seattle, Vancouver, Spokane, King and Pierce Counties. This year, *No Boundaries* tours the Tri-Cities area of Eastern Washington, Mid Columbia Region and Portland, Oregon (sponsored by Very Special Arts Oregon).

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Washington offers artists residencies at the Seattle and American Lake facilities of the VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

VSA/ITT Career Development Festival — In conjunction with ITT Educational Services, Very Special Arts Washington coordinates a VSA/ITT Career Development Festival at the ITT Technical Institute in Tukwila and Bothell. The result of a national partnership between Very Special Arts and ITT Educational Services, Inc., this festival provides young adults with an introduction to the arts and also to careers in the field of technical services to help strengthen their career development skills. Over 300 Washington state high school students with and without disabilities participate in career workshops and performances.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Very Special Arts Washington collaborates with the Deaf Youth Drama Program (DYDP) at Seattle Children's Theater to provide a scriptwriting workshop to deaf, hard-of-hearing and hearing teenagers. Professional artists teach participants writing skills and general theater knowledge. Scripts from this workshop are submitted for consideration at the national level.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS WEST VIRGINIA

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Access Theatre Residency — Access Theatre, based in Santa Barbara, CA, has a 16-year history as a national model theater company focusing on ability versus disability and creating quality original works with artists with and without disabilities. Very Special Arts West Virginia and the Theater Department of Marshall University cosponsor Access Theatre's presentation of a new multidisciplinary work, *Flight*, as part of a company-in-residence week during September 1996. During the residency, workshops are conducted for upper elementary, middle and secondary school students, university and community groups, and the professional community who work on a regular basis with people with disabilities. Public performances are given during the school day for students, and evening workshops/performances are presented for university and community patrons. The residency is made possible through the support of Marshall University, Very Special Arts, Birke Symposium, John Fielder Foundation and other campus organizations.

Art for Incarcerated Youth — Very Special Arts West Virginia, in cooperation with the State Department of Education, again offers a visual arts program for the students of the West Virginia Industrial Home for Youth. The weekly program was started in the spring of 1995 for 20 young men between the ages of 14 and 18. The program for 1996 is expanded to include all who would like to participate and offers the workshops on a twice weekly schedule. Very Special Arts West Virginia offers staff training, evaluation and curriculum guidance.

Arts for Seniors — For the sixth year, Very Special Arts West Virginia works cooperatively with Shawnee Hills Mental Retardation/Mental Health (MRMH) Centers in a four-county area to provide programs in visual art, dance and music for over 8,000 seniors. Shawnee Hills staff members also attend training sessions and artist-in-residence programs for instruction. The seniors are encouraged to participate in the statewide juried art exhibition, *Beyond Barriers.*

Beyond Barriers 1996 — *Beyond Barriers* is an exhibition of artwork by adults with disabilities in West Virginia over the age of 18. Very Special Arts West Virginia continues to sponsor this statewide initiative in cooperation with Shawnee Hills Mental Retardation/Mental Health (MRMH) Centers. Over 600 entries are received from participants from MRMH centers, private rehabilitation hospitals, Centers for Independent Living and veterans hospitals. Over $3,000 in prize money is offered.

The show tours eight sites statewide after opening in Charleston. In the past, the exhibit has traveled to Kentucky, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts West Virginia conducts festivals for over 7,000 participants in Athens, Charleston, Huntington, Institute, Morgantown, Parkersburg, Shepherdstown, Wheeling, and the counties of Wetzel, Brook, Handcock, Ohio and Marshall.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. For the seventh year, Very Special Arts West Virginia conducts dance workshops in eight districts. These workshops provide individuals with the opportunity to learn different aspects of movement and dance, which also increases the participants' physical strength and self-esteem. Participating sites include local hospitals, rehabilitation centers and MRMH centers. The program focuses on therapeutic and recreational activities, and some public performances are presented. This year, instruction in ballroom dancing is provided at the State Rehabilitation Center.

Organization of College and University Programs — Very Special Arts West Virginia continues to work towards bringing colleges and universities in West Virginia into a network of Very Special Arts West Virginia centers. The sites currently involved in this network are Marshall University, Concord College, Glenville College, Shepard College, and state universities in Morgantown and Parkersburg. Through this network, colleges and universities provide sites for festivals, meeting space for festival planning committees, faculty members as resources, trainers and art stop conductors, and students for festival activities. Plans for 1996 include bringing the Arts for Children in Hospitals program to the medical and nursing schools at Morgantown, Huntington and Lewisburg. In addition, Very Special Arts West Virginia has sponsored instruction to college and university staff and students on the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Early childhood programs have been conducted with Head Start programs in West Virginia since 1991. A West Virginia Head Start teacher at Capitol Center attended *Start with the Arts* training in Baltimore in 1993 and has since provided preservice training to participating teachers at the 19 other

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Head Start centers. In 1996, Very Special Arts West Virginia implements *Start with the Arts* at 20 centers of Kanawha County Head Start programs.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. In 1996, Very Special Arts West Virginia plans to produce two plays at the district level, which will be performed at a state festival. Of these plays, one play is submitted to represent the state at the national level.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Very Special Arts West Virginia encourages participants from the college and university network to apply and holds a concert at a state university in the early spring. One young soloist is nominated by Very Special Arts West Virginia to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level.

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Adaptive Arts Workshops — Very Special Arts Wisconsin conducts one-day workshops to bring together adaptive arts specialists, professional artists and teachers to learn and share adaptive techniques for their existing arts curriculum as well as arts activities for integrated classrooms. Each workshop focuses on techniques in creative movement, visual arts or music. Additional workshops focus on the use of the arts with early childhood students.

Artist-in-Residence Program — Professional artists are placed in schools and other facilities to work with 2,000 participants and staff on specific arts projects. Each year, artistic accomplishments from each residency are performed or exhibited at state, district and local festivals and at a special in-house "informance." This program provides integrated creative arts experiences for people with disabilities and serves as a catalyst for ongoing arts activities.

Celebrating Me — *Celebrating Me*, a book created by Very Special Arts Wisconsin and published in 1994, celebrates the lives and artistic achievements of 17 Wisconsin children and adults with disabilities. The book was distributed to over 25,000 Very Special Arts Wisconsin participants, volunteers and friends and serves as a resource to demonstrate the power of art.

Children's Collection — The Children's Collection celebrates the talents and abilities of Wisconsin children with disabilities by showcasing their visual artwork. The Children's Collection was Very Special Arts Wisconsin's submission to the 1992 Very Special Arts' national program, *The White House 200th Anniversary Art Exhibition*. Approximately 1,000 people participated in this project from Eagle River, Madison, Janesville, Milwaukee, Green Bay, New Richmond and Jonesville. The Children's Collection consist of 26 pieces and is exhibited throughout 1996.

Early Childhood Program — Entering its third year, the Early Childhood Program encourages the use of the arts as an educational tool to promote the development of social, cognitive and physical abilities in preschool students. This program provides 1,200 hours of teacher training, along with hands-on arts opportunities for the children through visiting artist sessions. In addition, to a wide range of activities developed by our local artist, the program uses Very Special Arts' *Start with the Arts* curriculum resource materials. *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms.

Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Over 3,500 people celebrate Very Special Arts Wisconsin's festivals in Alverno, Antigo, Dodgeville, Milwaukee, Lac du Flambeau, Sheboygan, Stevens Point, Superior and Union Grove.

New Visions Dance Project — The New Visions Dance Project introduces people with disabilities to the art of dance and creative movement. The project involves people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in dance workshops and classes. As part of the project, professional dance instructors receive training in adaptive techniques for including students with disabilities in their classes. Very Special Arts Wisconsin has sponsored the program for 10 years and conducts the program in 11 cities in 1996. Independent dance instructors learn adaptive arts techniques to integrate individuals with disabilities in their classes. Participants celebrate their accomplishments at public performances and at Very Special Arts Wisconsin events.

Permanent Collection — The Very Special Arts Wisconsin purchases the artwork of emerging Wisconsin adult artists with disabilities. The Permanent Collection currently consists of 54 pieces of art, 33 of which comprise an exhibit. The 1996 Permanent Collection Opening takes place on May 1, 1996, at the Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton.

Very Special Arts Wisconsin Choirs — More than 155 children and adults with disabilities participate in integrated choral ensembles. Participants meet regularly to rehearse in a variety of settings such as schools and community centers. Very Special Arts Wisconsin Choirs share their accomplishments at events across the state. Choral members are residents of Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Appleton, Madison, Rhinelander, Viroqua, La Cross and Stevens Point.

Very Special Arts Wisconsin Scholarship — The Earl and Eugenia Quirk Very Special Arts Scholarship encourages and enables a graduating high school senior with a disability to further develop his or her artistic abilities. Students eligible for this award must be Wisconsin citizens and accepted into an arts program at an accredited institution. In addition, district scholarships are occasionally awarded to artists with disabilities who show talent and demonstrate need.

Very Special Arts Wisconsin/University of Wisconsin Marching Band Program — More than 280 high school students and young adults with disabilities are matched with members of their high school bands who act as 'peer coaches' during weekly marching band practice. On Very Special Saturday, participants join the University of Wisconsin Marching Band in performing at a Big 10 football game. Since 1987, this program has showcased the musical accomplishments of students with and without disabilities and has served as a catalyst for ongoing integrated music programs in schools.

Volunteer Training — During 1996, approximately 2,000 individuals are trained at two annual state volunteer training workshops. Very Special Arts Wisconsin Advisory Council members train volunteers on how to help implement Very Special Arts Wisconsin programs throughout the year. Volunteers also receive additional program-specific training.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS WYOMING

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Festivals — Very Special Arts Festivals are community-based celebrations that showcase participants in Very Special Arts programs across the United States. Festivals feature performances, art exhibitions, demonstrations and educational workshops where children, youth and adults with disabilities proudly share their artistic accomplishments with the public. Very Special Arts Wyoming conducts festivals for over 10,000 participants in many sites throughout the state.

Kids on the Block — *Kids On The Block* is an educational performance using puppet characters with disabilities to increase audience awareness and understanding of people with disabilities. The puppet characters interact with audience members while addressing questions about disabilities and other issues of social concern. The troupe of seven puppeteers perform in schools, day-care centers, festivals, health fairs and summer camps throughout Wyoming. This year, a call for puppet makers and scriptwriters will expand the puppet program in Wyoming.

Mega - The Ultimate Conference on Disabilities — The Mega Conference is a statewide conference held annually in Casper. The Mega invites individuals and groups from across the state to present on various disability topics, programs, resources, and technological aids and tools. The Mega brings together all support systems and programs for people with disabilities in the state. Very Special Arts Wyoming participates by sponsoring an information booth, an art show, entertainment and art stops for conference participants.

Special Friends — A group of older workers and seniors assists Very Special Arts Wyoming in raising funds for arts programs; conducting awareness speeches at other community organizations; and volunteering time, energy and materials to festivals. They also pursue their own artistic interests by sharing and networking with other artists. The goal of the Special Friends is to increase public awareness and visibility of Very Special Arts Wyoming.

Start with the Arts — *Start with the Arts* is an instructional program for 4-, 5- and 6-year-olds that uses the arts to assist young children in exploring themes commonly taught in early childhood classrooms. The program develops basic literacy skills and offers engaging arts activities teachers can use with young children with and without disabilities. Parents are provided with instructional materials to continue their children's learning at home. Very Special Arts Wyoming continues to conduct training sessions and workshops for Head Start staff.

VA/Very Special Arts Program — The VA/Very Special Arts Program provides veterans who receive care at VA medical centers with quality arts experiences through artist-in-residence programs and community-based activities. A collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Very Special Arts, this rehabilitative program for veterans builds communication skills, independence and self esteem. Very Special Arts Wyoming implements programs in the VA hospital in Sheridan, where professional artist instructors, many of whom are veterans themselves, conduct art workshops. The artist instructors also work with the hospital staff to ensure that they continue the program on a permanent basis.

Young Playwrights Program — The Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program introduces students to the art of writing for the stage. A Teachers' Guide provides creative writing and drama exercises for the classroom. Very Special Arts sponsors an annual call for entries, inviting students to submit original scripts addressing some aspect of disability. The final scripts are read by a distinguished Artists Selection Committee of theater professionals who select up to two scripts for professional production at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Students from across the state are invited to submit plays to Very Special Arts Wyoming. The finalist receives a scholarship and represents Very Special Arts Wyoming at the national level.

Young Soloists Program — The Very Special Arts Young Soloists Program annually recognizes outstanding young musicians with disabilities, ages 25 and under, who have exhibited exceptional talents as vocalists or instrumentalists. Each year, a committee of music professionals selects two award recipients to receive scholarship funds and to perform at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Panasonic Young Soloists Award is generously sponsored by Matsushita Consumer Electronics Company. Middle and high schools and junior colleges students statewide are invited to submit auditions to Very Special Arts Wyoming to compete for scholarships at the state level. State finalists receive scholarships and are nominated to participate in the Young Soloists Program at the national level. Very Special Arts Wyoming continues to expand this program by creating a band of musicians with disabilities.

CROSS-REFERENCE INDEXES OF FREQUENTLY REQUESTED PROGRAMS

The cross-reference indexes list the names of Very Special Arts state organizations conducting programs in the specific topic areas:

- Programs and Services.....pages 138 - 141
- Artistic Disciplines.....142 - 143
- Very Special Arts National Programs.....144 - 145

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Accessibility Information Clearinghouse/Library

Alaska
Colorado
Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Louisiana
Maine
Massachusetts
Minnesota
Nebraska
New Jersey
Oregon
Washington
Wyoming

Accessibility Issues Consultation/Training

Alaska
California
Colorado
Florida
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Maine
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Nebraska
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New Jersey
New Mexico
Ohio
Utah
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Artist Directory/Roster

Illinois
Iowa
Ohio
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Artists Unlimited Project

Arizona
Georgia
Hawaii
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Montana
Utah

Artist Residencies
Alabama
Arizona
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Oklahoma
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Utah
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Arts Education
Alabama
Arizona
California
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Nebraska
New Jersey
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Dakota
Utah
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin

Audio Description Training & Services
Colorado
Indiana
Maine
Ohio

Career Development
Alaska
District of Columbia
Florida
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Maine
Massachusetts
Michigan
Mississippi
Missouri
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Dakota
Utah
Washington

First Night Celebrations
Georgia
Hawaii
Kentucky
Maine
New Hampshire

Galleries/Gift Shops
Arizona
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Florida
Illinois
Louisiana
New Mexico
Utah
Virginia

Exhibitions
Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York City
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Rhode Island
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Mini-Grant Programs
California
Idaho
Indiana
Iowa
Kentucky
Massachusetts
Michigan
Oregon
Utah

Murals Programs
Alabama
Arizona
Kentucky
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
New York City
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Vermont

Performances
Arizona
California
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Kentucky
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Utah
Vermont
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Programs for Adults
Almost all Very Special Arts state organizations provide programs for adults with disabilities.

Programs for Children & Youth
All Very Special Arts state organizations provide programs for children & youth with disabilities.

Programs for Seniors
Alabama
Arizona
Georgia
Illinois
Maryland
Massachusetts
Mississippi
New Hampshire
New York City
Oklahoma
Oregon
South Carolina
Texas
Utah
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Publications
Alaska
Florida
Illinois
Louisiana
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Montana
Ohio
Oregon
Wisconsin

Scholarships
Colorado
Delaware
Iowa
Maryland
Missouri
Nevada
Tennessee
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Training Workshops & Demonstrations
Arkansas
Connecticut
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York City
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Dakota
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES

Ceramics & Pottery
New Hampshire
New York
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Carolina

Clowning & Comedy Improvisation
Georgia
Minnesota

Creative Writing
Alaska
Arizona
Florida
Illinois
Indiana
Louisiana
Missouri
Montana
New Jersey
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Rhode Island
South Carolina
South Dakota
Utah

Dance
Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
Colorado
Connecticut
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts
Montana
Nevada
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Utah
Wisconsin

Drama
Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Montana
New Jersey
Oklahoma
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Utah
Wyoming

Music
Alabama
Arizona
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Iowa
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Mississippi
Missouri
Nebraska
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
South Dakota
Texas
Vermont
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

Opera
Arizona

Photography
Arizona
Illinois
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon

Puppetry
Hawaii
New York City
South Dakota
Wyoming

Video & Computer Technology
District of Columbia
Idaho
Kentucky
Louisiana
Minnesota
New Mexico
New York
Oregon
Texas

Visual Arts & Crafts
Almost all Very Special Arts state organizations conduct visual arts & crafts programs.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS NATIONAL PROGRAMS

For descriptions of Very Special Arts National Programs, refer to pages 1 - 3.

Arts for Children in Hospitals
Alabama
California
Florida
Illinois
Kansas
Kentucky
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Ohio

Festivals
Almost all Very Special Arts state organizations conduct festivals.

Mentoring Grants
Alaska
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Indiana
Kansas
Kentucky
Maine
Minnesota
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Pennsylvania
Utah
Vermont

Legacy Program
Connecticut
Georgia
Kentucky
New Hampshire
New York

Native American Initiative
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Oregon

New Visions Dance Project
Alabama
Alaska
Colorado
Connecticut
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Maine
Missouri
Montana
Nevada
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Utah
West Virginia
Wisconsin

State Project Grants
Georgia
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
New Jersey
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Vermont

Start with the Arts
Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Delaware
Florida
Illinois
Kansas
Kentucky
Maine
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
Nebraska
New Hampshire
New Mexico
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Texas
Utah
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

VA/Very Special Arts Program

California
Connecticut
Delaware
Illinois
Kansas
Maryland
Minnesota
Mississippi
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Washington
Wyoming

VSA/ITT Career Development Festivals

Alabama
Florida
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Michigan
Missouri
New Mexico
Oregon
Washington

Young Playwrights Program

Alabama
Alaska
Florida
Idaho
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Minnesota
Missouri
New Hampshire
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
Washington
West Virginia
Wyoming

Young Soloists Program

Alabama
Arizona
Delaware
Florida
Iowa
Kentucky
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
New Jersey
New Mexico
North Carolina
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Dakota
West Virginia
Wyoming

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